

800,000 Iraqis killed by U.N. sanctions — Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AFP) — More than 800,000 Iraqis have died from the effects of U.N. sanctions imposed after the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, according to new health ministry figures published Saturday. A total of 841,676 Iraqis, including more than 320,000 children aged less than five died between 1990 and May 1997 from "various illnesses, malnutrition and a shortage of medical supplies" caused by the embargo, the ministry said. The figures are more moderate than earlier statistics from Baghdad which has said 1.4 million people including 750,000 under-fives have died from the sanctions.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية "الراي"

Majali back home from Europe

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Abdul Salam Majali returned home Saturday after he accompanied His Majesty King Hussein on a European tour. Dr. Majali was received at the airport by Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour.

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Palestinians shoot Israeli woman on West Bank

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Palestinian gunmen shot and wounded an Israeli woman as she drove near a Jewish settlement on the West Bank, police said Saturday. The woman was hit by automatic gunfire late Friday on the edge of the settlement of Radar near the green line separating Israel and the West Bank. She was taken to Hadassa Hospital in Jerusalem where her injuries were said not to be life-threatening. Police did not say whether she was a settler. The army began a search of the area focusing on the nearby Palestinian village of Katannah. The shooting comes amid a crisis in relations between Israel and the Palestinians, sparked by Israeli plans to expand Jewish settlements on areas where the Palestinians hope to establish a future state.

OIC denounces U.S. Congress resolution

JEDDAH (AFP) — The Organisation of the Islamic Conference on Saturday condemned a U.S. House of Representatives vote recognising Jerusalem as Israel's united capital as an insult to Muslims around the world. The vote was a "dangerous provocation of Muslim feelings" and "a flagrant violation of all the resolutions of the international community," said OIC Secretary General Ezzedin Laraki. "This vote, which goes against the United States' role as co-sponsor of the Middle East peace process, encourages Israel to pursue its expansionist policies and to reject the establishment of a real peace in the region," said Mr. Laraki in a statement from OIC headquarters in the Saudi city of Jeddah.

Rafsanjani to attend D-8 summit in Turkey

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was to travel to Turkey Saturday to attend a developing-eight or D-8 summit of Muslim countries in Istanbul, the presidential office announced. Mr. Rafsanjani was to depart later Saturday at the head of a political and economic delegation, it said. Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan called the two-day summit to promote economic cooperation among the member countries — Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey.

Syrian president meets Lebanese prime minister

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad met Saturday with visiting Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, officials said. Mr. Hariri, accompanied by his defence minister, met earlier with Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam on "the situation in the Middle East, the regional economic conference scheduled in Qatar and a project for an Arab common market," the Syrian news agency SANA said. Syria opposes the economic conference to be held in Qatar in November because Israel will be invited.

King: Europe, Russia have a role but main role is that of U.S.

BERN (J.T.) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor Saturday concluded a visit to Switzerland and left for Britain on the fourth leg of their current European tour. Speaking before departure from Bern, Switzerland, King Hussein said that the Middle East is in need of all concerned parties' efforts in order to attain aspired peace. Talking to the press after meeting the president of the Swiss Federation, Arnold Koller, King Hussein said: "We are in need of help from all parties concerned in order to shape the future of the Middle East and to search for solutions to problems that we have been suffering from."

"The Middle East has suffered for long. I believe that the peace process should proceed and should be enhanced and all peace efforts should be implemented. Efforts should be exerted to achieve peace on all tracks. We are searching for a comprehensive peace and we believe that Europe and Russia have a role but the main role should be that of the U.S. We hope all efforts will be pooled to fulfill the desire of the world community and help the people of the region overcome the present difficulties to attain peace which is the desire of the majority of the Arabs and Israelis," King Hussein told the press that Jordan was grateful for Switzerland for its help to the Kingdom. "I had the opportunity to assure the president that we are totally committed to the cause of a just and comprehensive peace in the region. No matter how difficult it is, we will get there because this is a legacy that we want to leave for future generations to live in peace, harmony and security and to divert their energies and resources to building a future that is worthy of them in the entire region."

Referring to the talks with the Swiss president, the King said: "They were open and frank because our relations are based on mutual trust, confidence, respect and clarity."

Pro-government, centrist parties top Moroccan election vote-count

RABAT (R) — Pro-government and centre-right parties dominated early results in Morocco's local elections Saturday after a poll which will help shape a powerful new upper house of parliament later this year. Final results were expected later Saturday. The elections were contested by a dozen parties, most of them linked up in three alliances — the opposition Koutla, the pro-government rightist Wifaq group and a centre-right group led by the Independent National Rally. With results declared from just over 11,600 seats of the 24,253 at stake in Friday's ballot, the pro-government

Wifaq group with their centrist allies had taken more than 6,700 seats in the communal and municipal councils. Five opposition parties had taken over 3,600 seats. The old guard Istiqlal Party, one of the four making up the Koutla, had taken the largest number of seats, a total of 1,874. On Saturday, the Istiqlal Party paper L'Opinion said: "The operation of the vote in certain areas was marked by irregularities, as was the case during the electoral campaign."

The second largest party to emerge from the partial results was the pro-government National Independents Rally with 1,577. Independent candidates had taken 1,166 seats. The local elections for 1,547 councils are the first of a series due to culminate in September with a general election for a new lower house of parliament. Under the constitution, a new upper house is to be formed with power to topple the government through a no-confidence motion, with 60 per cent of its members being chosen by the local councils emerging from Friday's ballot. Almaghrib newspaper Sa-

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Hizbollah detains UNIFIL men over Beirut filming

TYRE (R) — Hizbollah members held for 10 hours three U.N. peacekeeping military personnel who had been filming in a southern Beirut suburb, the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon said on Saturday. "On Friday 13 June around 1800 hours, an Irish and two Italian military personnel of UNIFIL travelling in a U.N. vehicle were apprehended by a group who identified themselves as 'Hizbollah security' in Beirut's Bourj Al-Barajneh district," UNIFIL said in a statement. "UNIFIL personnel were blindfolded, moved several

times and continuously interrogated until 0430 Saturday when they were released," the statement, faxed from UNIFIL offices in Tyre to an international news agency in Beirut, said. It added that UNIFIL personnel "were video-taping in a street decked with colourful banners and flags" in the capital's suburbs — a bastion of Hizbollah — when they were arrested. In Beirut, head of Hizbollah central media office Nayef Qrayem told Reuters the UNIFIL personnel "were filming in a sensitive area close to the

homes of commanders in the resistance. "This caused the confusion. UNIFIL forces have always had the freedom to move around but the fact that they were filming and in light of our security considerations related to fighting the Israeli enemy, our men needed to question them and to review the filmed material," Mr. Qrayem said. "They were delayed because an interpreter had to be brought in to translate during the questioning," he added.

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Swiss lawmakers demand action against Iran over 'state terrorism'

BERN (AP) — Evidence that Iran's government was involved in a political assassination in Switzerland is even stronger than that accepted in a similar case in Germany, lawmakers said. Members of parliament said Thursday that 116 of 200 Swiss lawmakers in the lower house have signed a demand that two Iranian agents be tried in absentia for murder in the April 1990 case if Iran refuses to extradite them. The two agents are wanted in the slaying of Kazem Rajavi, a senior member of the Baghdad-based Iranian opposition group Mujahadeen Khalq. Swiss authorities accused two Iranian agents, Mohsen Sharif Estahani and Ahmad Taheri, of carrying out the killing near Geneva. They were arrested later in Paris. But France secretly extradited

the pair to Iran before they could be brought to face trial in Switzerland. The Swiss were furious. In the Berlin case, an Iranian and three Lebanese were convicted in the 1992 slayings of four Iranian dissidents in a Berlin restaurant. In its April 10 ruling, the Berlin court said the order to kill came directly from Iran's top leaders, a charge Tehran has steadfastly denied. The case led to a crisis in relations between Iran and the European Union (EU). Switzerland also toughened its stand against Iran after the 1979 seizure of American hostages in the U.S. embassy in Tehran. Rudolf Weiersmueller, was recalled for consultations after the verdict and has yet to return. Swiss delegate Eugen David, chairman of the Parliamentary Group for Human Rights, said that similarities

between the German and Swiss cases were "very apparent." But in the Rajavi case there are even more indications of an Iranian government participation, said Mr. David. Roland Chatelain, the case's Swiss investigating judge, told the Associated Press that he has gained valuable insights from German authorities. He said he expected to be able to take further steps during the summer, but he declined to go into detail. As a neutral country, Switzerland has represented U.S. interests in Iran since the 1979 seizure of American hostages in the U.S. embassy in Tehran. Switzerland also has cancelled a seminar on investment in Iran and has stopped an internal study on whether to open up regular human rights talks with Tehran.

Israeli troops wound 30 Palestinians; Netanyahu cancels Clinton meeting

HEBRON (R) — Israeli troops firing rubber bullets shot and slightly wounded 30 Palestinian protesters in the West Bank town of Hebron on Saturday, witnesses and Hebron hospital officials said. The Hebron clashes erupted when dozens of Palestinian youths began hurling stones and petrol bombs at Israeli troops guarding Jewish enclaves in the city of 100,000 Palestinians. Some 400 Jewish settlers live in the heavily fortified enclaves. The Israeli army confirmed there were clashes but said so far it had no reports of casualties. The fighting ended after several hours when the Palestinian protesters withdrew, witnesses said. Several Palestinian demonstrators told Reuters they had come to confront the Israelis to protest against a non-binding U.S. House of Representatives resolution on Tuesday calling on President Bill Clinton to affirm that Jerusalem must remain Israel's undivided capital. Witnesses said they saw demonstrators drag away at least 30 Palestinians who



An injured Israeli soldier is evacuated during clashes between soldiers and Palestinian protesters in the center of Hebron city, the West Bank, Saturday. Palestinian youths hurled petrol bombs and stones at Israeli soldiers in Hebron as the Palestinian Authority warned its patience was wearing thin over Israeli settlement building (AFP photo)

had been hit by rubber bullets — some to nearby ambulances which took them to hospital and others to Palestinian medical personnel who treated them on the spot. They said at least three

Israeli soldiers were injured when they were hit with stones. One Palestinian who crossed into the area under Israeli jurisdiction was arrested by Israeli troops. Officials at Hebron's Alia

hospital confirmed the Palestinian casualties. Witnesses said there were no Palestinian police at the scene of the clashes. Israel handed 80 per cent

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U.S. credibility hurt by vote on Arab Jerusalem — PNA

NABLUS (AFP) — President Yasser Arafat's Palestinian leadership said Saturday the U.S. role in the peace process had been damaged by a House of Representatives vote recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital. "We do not understand what reasons pushed the House of Representatives to make this resolution," the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) said in a statement after its weekly meeting. "This decision damages the credibility of the United States and its role" in the peace process, said the statement carried by the Palestinian news agency Wafa. The self-rule cabinet and PNA leadership held their weekly meeting headed by Mr. Arafat late Friday night in the West Bank city of Nablus. The U.S. House of Representatives Tuesday passed by a vote of 406-17 a non-binding resolution recognising

Jerusalem as the "united capital" of Israel and set aside \$100 million to move the U.S. embassy there from Tel Aviv. The administration of U.S. President Bill Clinton opposes the measure, saying it could hurt the peace process. Washington sponsors between Israel and the Palestinians. The United States, like most of the world, has never recognised Israel's annexation in 1967 of east Jerusalem, which the Palestinians want as the capital of an independent state in an eventual peace deal with Israel. Palestinian officials have complained in the past that U.S. mediation in the peace process is biased towards Israel, and they have particularly focused their criticism on the U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross. Meanwhile, the leadership also held Israel "responsible" for clashes Thursday between Palestinian protesters and Israeli soldiers in the Gaza

Strip, and warned of more protests against Jewish settlement building. "The Palestinian masses cannot be patient any more and they will confront the expansion of settlements in Gaza, the West Bank and in east Jerusalem and at Jabal Abu Ghneim," it said. Israel has blamed the PNA for fomenting Thursday's clashes which broke out during protests outside Jewish settlements in Gaza and it has warned of a harsh response if unrest escalates. Jabal Abu Ghneim is a hill in Arab east Jerusalem where Israel began construction of a new Jewish settlement in mid-March, sparking a crisis in the peace process. The Palestinians have refused to resume negotiations unless Israel stops all the settlement expansion, including the Abu Ghneim construction. Israel has rejected any halt in the work.

Either Netanyahu or peace — Erakat

BETHLEHEM (AFP) — Top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat said Saturday the peace process has become a choice between Benjamin Netanyahu and peace because of the Israeli prime minister's settlement policies. "Netanyahu's government has made clear that a stop in settlement building would cause it to fall. So we have come before a choice: either Netanyahu or peace," Mr. Erakat said in a speech in the West Bank city of Bethlehem. The Palestinians have refused to return to negotiations with Israel, on hold since mid-March, until

(Continued on page 7)

Local elections may be held up by Israeli army presence — PNA official

BETHLEHEM (AFP) — Palestinian local elections may not take place in August as scheduled because of Israel's failure to conduct troop withdrawals in the West Bank, a Palestinian minister said Saturday. "It was decided that local elections take place on August 9 to choose 374 local councils in villages and towns, and from the technical point of view everything is ready," said local administration minister, Saeb Erakat. "There is only one obstacle and that is Israel, which has not abided by its commitments to conduct troop withdrawals in the West Bank," Mr. Erakat told journalists in the West Bank city of Bethlehem. "Over 90 per cent of the districts in which elections were to take place are still under Israeli army control. How can we conduct elections with that

high a number still under occupation?" he said. The local council elections are the first Palestinian elections in which all political forces have agreed to participate, including the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, the largest rival to Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and most violent opponent to his peace deals with Israel. The Israeli army still controls 97 per cent of the West Bank in areas denoted "B" and "C". According to the accords, Israel is to conduct three troop withdrawals from the West Bank by mid-1998. It announced in March that it would withdraw from nine per cent of the West Bank in the first stage, mostly from

(Continued on page 7)

New Bethlehem mayor appointed in place of Freij

BETHLEHEM (AFP) — The West Bank self-rule town of Bethlehem swore in a new mayor, Hanna Nasser, Saturday to replace its veteran leader Elias Freij. Mr. Nasser, 54, previously deputy mayor, was appointed to the position by Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority (PNA) after 80-year-old Mr. Freij, the city's elected mayor of 25 years, retired in May due to health reasons. Mr. Freij, who took office in 1972, was the last elected mayor of a major West Bank town to remain in office. Other mayors have been appointed by Mr. Arafat's authority. Since Mr. Nasser is a Roman Catholic, a Greek

Orthodox Christian, George Hazbon, was appointed his deputy, following a tradition followed since 1887 that the two denominations must split the top spots in the traditionally Christian town. A 14-member council was also sworn in during the ceremony which was attended by Saeb Erakat, the local administration minister in the PNA. Bethlehem, home to nearly 17,000 people, has been particularly hard hit by a year-long security closure of the West Bank by Israel which has undermined tourism, its main industry and cut off the city from its northern neighbour Israel.

Lebanon welcomes U.N. vote billing Israel for Cana damages

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanon Friday welcomed a U.N. General Assembly vote calling on Israel to pay \$1.7 million in damages for shelling a peacekeeping base in southern Lebanon last year.

The vote "proved the international organisation's credibility in the face of pressures" against the measure, Foreign Minister Faris Bouez was quoted as saying by Future TV, a local station controlled by Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Earlier Friday, during a

meeting with the U.S. charge d'affaires, Ron Schleicher, Mr. Bouez had rejected an American compromise to alter the wording of the resolution, state-run Beirut Radio said, quoring unnamed diplomatic sources.

"Lebanon scored a diplomatic victory against Israel," the radio said.

The vote on the measure in the General Assembly was 66-2 with 59 abstentions.

Israel and the United States voted against the

measure, which bills Israel for the April 18, 1996 attack on a U.N. base in Cana town that killed 100 civilians hiding there to escape an Israeli bombing blitz.

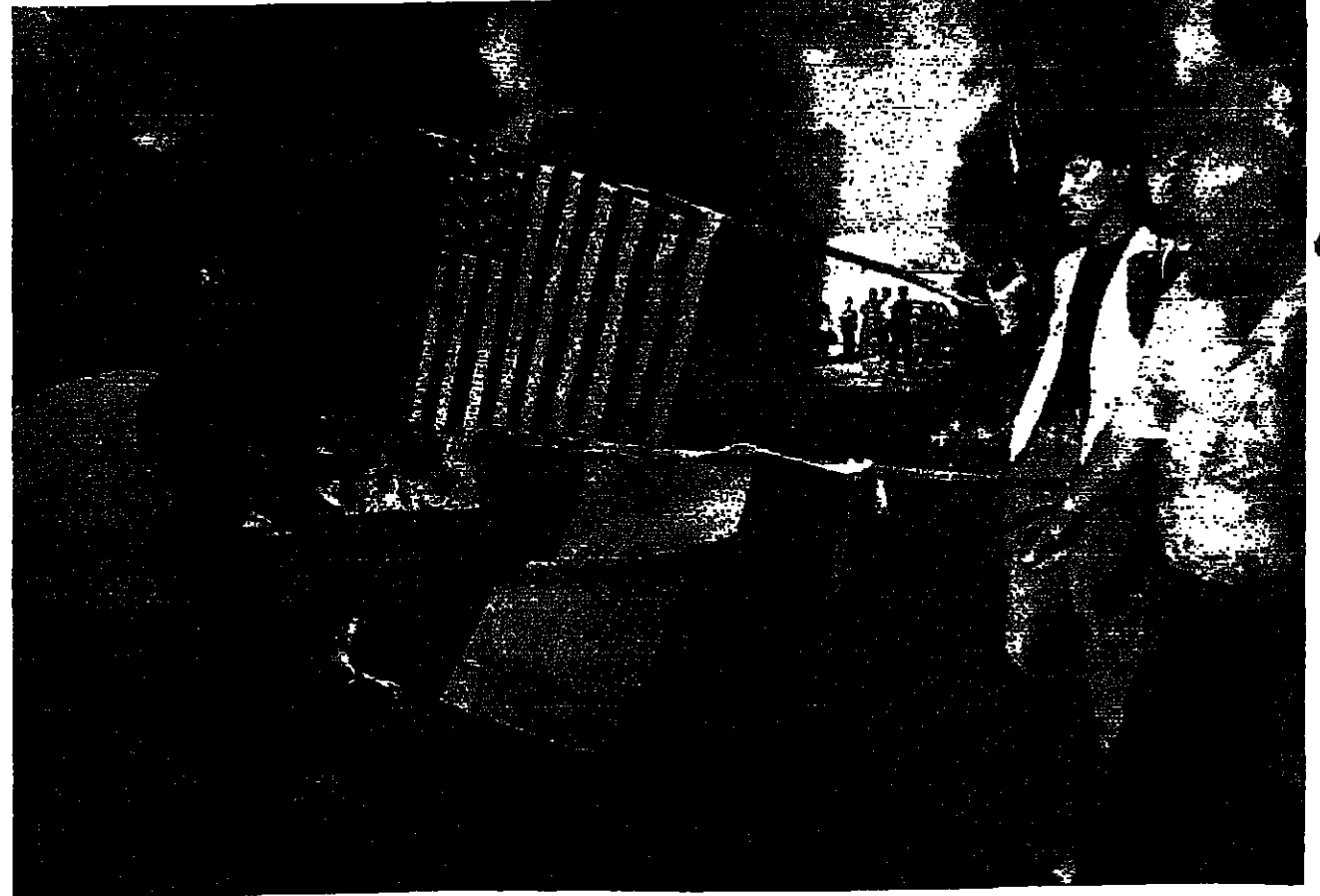
Separately, the General Assembly approved a main resolution providing funding for the U.N. monitoring force in southern Lebanon by a 127-2 vote. Israel and the United States voted against and Russia abstained.

Mr. Bouez was quoted by Future TV as saying the

vote "not only constituted a denunciation of the Cana massacre, but also of the pressures that threatened the very function of the organisation."

Israel said then its forces hit the U.N. base by mistake in the heat of battle after guerrillas of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah fired on Israeli targets from nearby.

Lebanon said Israeli forces deliberately attacked the base.



Palestinian guerrillas loyal to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Saturday burn Israeli and U.S. flags in 'Ain Al Hilweh refugee camp near the port city of Sidon. The guerrillas were protesting against a non-binding recommendation of the U.S. House of Representatives recognising Jerusalem as Israel's unified capital (Reuters photos).

Sudan airplane hijacker to stand trial

KHARTOUM (AFP) — A Sudanese man who hijacked a plane to Egypt in 1994 will stand trial in Khartoum, despite his reported trial by an Egyptian court for the crime, according to newspaper reports here Saturday.

Prosecutor General Abdul Rahman Ibrahim, quoted by the independent daily Akhbar Al Youm, said the man had admitted he had not actually been tried in Egypt after all but recruited by a Sudanese opposition faction instead. Adil Mahjoub, 28, was arrested with an unspecified number of civilians and soldiers two weeks ago for planning a series of political assassinations.

Gen. Ibrahim said he would be sent for trial over the hijacking of the Sudan Airways plane to Luxor in Egypt in April 1994 and jeopardising the lives of its passengers.

"The suspect has personally confessed that he was not tried in Egypt and the suit filed against him here on April 4, 1994 has not been closed."

Egyptian authorities turned down a request for his extradition, saying he would stand trial in Egypt. He was later reportedly sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Mr. Mahjoub has allegedly admitted being recruited into an opposition faction based in Eritrea, where he underwent training in explosives and assassination operations before sneaking into Sudan.

He was reported to have been planning to blow up parliament.

Egypt to open new desert airports to attract investors

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt will soon open two airports to encourage businessmen to travel to desert regions where the government has several investment schemes underway, the head of civil aviation said on Saturday.

An airport will open next week in Dakhla and another in early July in Oweinat in the western desert "to receive planes to help businessmen and investors in both regions," Abdul Fatah Kato told reporters.

At the moment Dakhla, 740 kilometres southwest of Cairo, can be reached by road and is home to an oasis. However, only a dirt track leads to the barren

region of Oweinat, more than 1,000 kilometres away.

The Civil Aviation Authority spent a total of 25 million pounds (around \$8 million) to build both airports and hopes to phase them over in a later phase to the private sector, Mr. Kato said.

Private Egyptian companies built the airports over the past three months, he said.

The new airports will be each able to receive light and medium-size aeroplanes in addition to having a 2,500 metres landing strip, a two-plane parking area and a passenger terminal.

Egypt launched a huge project called New Valley in January to reclaim desert land in the southwest of the country aimed at increasing its agriculture land from 5.5 per cent to 30 per cent of its total area in 25 years.

Last month Egypt and Libya signed an agreement to search for gold and iron in the Oweinat border region between the two countries and Sudan.

Cairo also signed deals last month for the search of oil and natural gas in the western desert and southern Egypt with foreign companies.

U.N. fears latest Iraqi refusal marks shift in policy

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Iraq has blocked U.N. inspectors from three suspected weapon sites, and U.N. officials fear that President Saddam Hussein has decided to stop cooperating with U.N. efforts to ensure that he has destroyed all of his high-tech weapons.

U.N. inspectors wrote the council that Iraqi troops blocked inspection teams from going into two installations Thursday in Baghdad and another Tuesday.

"We were told unequivocally that senior levels of the Iraqi government were not

going to approve access," deputy chief inspector Charles Duelfer said.

Chief inspector Rolf Ekeus said the teams were searching for "tools and documents" but refused to elaborate until his inspectors return from Baghdad next week.

A letter outlining the latest incidents was sent to Security Council President Sergey Lavrov of Russia Thursday.

Iraq is required to allow U.N. inspectors into any site they choose to make sure that Baghdad has complied with U.N. orders to scrap its weapons of mass destruction.

Those orders were issued in 1991 after U.S.-led coalition forces drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

Until the inspectors confirm Iraq's compliance, the council will not lift crippling economic sanctions imposed after President Saddam sent his troops into Kuwait, triggering the Gulf war.

Iraq has from time to time barred inspectors from certain sites which it considers sensitive. The Iraqis generally backed down after warnings from the council.

But U.N. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity,

said this latest dispute appears more serious because the refusal was conveyed by senior members of the elite Presidential Guards rather than lower-ranking figures.

The officials said that indicated the order came from the "highest levels" of the Iraqi government, perhaps from President Saddam himself. Some U.N. officials said the Iraqis may be trying to wear down council resolve to maintain the sanctions and see whether Washington is still committed to a strong anti-Iraq policy.

"We feel this may reflect a policy ... not to abide by the measures of resolution" demanding compliance, Mr. Duelfer said.

Iraq's refusal to allow access to the suspected weapons sites followed incidents last week in which Iraqi officials allegedly interfered with four helicopter flights.

Britain and the United States have insisted that the council take a strong stand. They have urged Chile, a council member, to draft a statement of protest since the flight crews involved were Chilean citizens.

Israeli defence minister reviews laser air defence system

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai Friday reviewed the world's first laser-based air defence system designed for use in northern Israel against Katyusha rockets.

Mr. Mordechai expressed hope that the Tactical High Energy Laser (THEL) would be particularly helpful in protecting border towns like Kiryat Shmona, which has already been hit by a deadly Katyusha rocket attack.

He stopped here on a weaponry and aircraft tour of military installations and

defence contractors in Arizona, Texas and Minnesota before heading off next week for the Paris air show.

The \$89 million project is still under development. If future tests prove successful, as were two conducted at the White Sands missile range in New Mexico in February, deployment in Israel could begin mid-1998.

TRW spokesmen said that the company's laser defence system would allow Israel to respond immediately to rocket threats at a fraction of the cost of the Patriot missiles that are normally used against the

rockets.

Katyusha rockets have been used in warfare since World War II, but they have since been improved to be more lethal and can now be fitted with chemical and biological warheads.

The laser-based air defence system would enable a gunner and commander to visually spot the rockets and initiate an automatic tracking and firing response that could be stopped only by a manual override.

"This is designed to protect settlements," said Brooks McKinney, TRW's public

relations manager. "It will be very, very good at protecting civilian populations and military facilities."

Israel has been particularly concerned about the damage that Katyusha rockets could inflict on its northern cities and kibbutzim, and this system offers, possibly, its best defence, Mr. Mordechai said.

THEL's development has been swift. Typically the U.S. Defence Department takes between 10 to 13 years to develop and deploy a new defence system. This programme began in May 1995 and is expected to be in Israel

by mid-1998.

Though the prototype was expensive, the system is relatively cheap to operate compared to Patriots, which cost \$1 million a piece and typically are fired in pairs.

The laser costs \$1,000 per shot and can respond to multiple targets, though TRW officials would not say how quickly they could handle a salvo of rockets.

Officials expect future units would be cheaper, but they could not say by how much once the economy of scale is factored in.

Turkey's Islamists suffer fresh blows

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's Islamist-led government suffered another series of body blows Friday, pushing it closer to collapse after months of political gridlock.

A secularist cabinet member resigned, citing what he said were government Islamist leanings at odds with Turkey's decades-old tradition of keeping party politics out of the mosque.

And a far-right power broker refused a government invitation to form a broader coalition to ward off an anti-Islamist campaign by the secularist army.

Analysts said President Suleyman Demirel, who usually stays out of party politics, might have to step in.

"We look like we're heading for a Demirel-appointed technocrat government in the summer and elections by the autumn," said a senior Western diplomat.

Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, modern Turkey's first Islamist leader, has said he would step down in favour of his conservative coalition partner Tansu Ciller by the end of this month and go for snap polls.

No date has been fixed for early elections, but Friday

leading Islamist Deputy Salih Karpuzuz told reporters that he saw no problem with the handover of the prime minister's post to Mrs. Ciller by June 18.

A senior deputy from her True Path Party said late Thursday an announcement would be made on June 17 on the handover of power to Mrs. Ciller, who previously served as Turkey's first woman prime minister.

The handover and polls would have to be approved by the president and parliament, where Mr. Erbakan lacks a clear majority.

Mr. Demirel, an avowed secularist, can block the planned power transfer, appoint a caretaker government and call polls himself if no viable coalition becomes apparent within 45 days of Mr. Erbakan's standing down.

However, the president said it was too early for him to play an active role. "The head of the government comes and hands me his resignation. After that, I go on the stage but not until then," Anatolian news agency quoted him as saying.

Tourism Minister Bahattin Uyel quit Friday, becoming the fourth minister from Mrs. Ciller's True Path Party wing to ditch the coalition in two months.

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME TWO

15:30 Holy Koran
15:35 French Programmes
16:05 Global Family
16:30 Energy Express
16:50 Doc. — Our World
17:15 American Chart Show
18:10 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headline
19:35 Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
20:00 Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
20:30 The Churchills
21:18 Rene-gale
22:00 Soccer match — Bolivia vs Peru
23:59 One West Walkiki

PRAYER TIMES

50 (Sunrise) Fajr
5 (Sunrise) Duha
Dhuhr
Asr
Maghreb
Isha

ARCHES

Nazareth Church
740
Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel.

771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.

775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church

Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church

Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical

Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel.

654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel.

675691.

The Evangelical Local Church

in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking

Latin Catholics Parish Tel.

614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Relative hot, dry and dusty weather

er conditions will prevail with

winds southwesterly moderate to

active. In Aqaba, winds will be

northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 20/31

Aqaba 26/38

Deserts 19/35

Jordan Valley 24/35

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 37, Aqaba 40 Humidity

readings: Amman 26 per cent,

Aqaba 24 per cent.

USEFUL

TELEPHONE

NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Youssef Rashid 875792

Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab 758848

Dr. Khalil Jball 740740

Dr. Walid Al Masri 675485

Firas pharmacy 778336

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276852

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799

Khalifah pharmacy 985417

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276852

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799

Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Dept. 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water & Sewage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

J. Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Co. 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 313813/32

Khalidi Maternity 642811/6

Akileh Maternity 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Indian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

Al-Bashir 775111/26

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Queen explores UWC cooperation possibilities with Swiss NGOs

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Friday met with the president and members of the Swiss Association for United World Colleges (UWC) in Bern, Switzerland, a Royal Court statement said.

Queen Noor, who is the president of the UWC, discussed the progress of expanding cooperation between the International Red Cross Committee (ICRC), the Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the UWC.

The UWC college in Norway's pioneering partnership with the International Red Cross/Red Crescent has enabled most of its students to be selected from refugee camps, developing countries and Central and Eastern Europe.

The Queen and the Swiss Association members also discussed ways in which countries, such as Switzerland, could raise scholarship funds not only for Swiss children, but also for students from developing countries.

The UWC is an equal opportunity international secondary education programme designed to foster cross-cultural understanding and global peace. Founded in 1962, it consists of nine colleges situated in Wales, Canada, Singapore, the United States, Swaziland, Italy, Venezuela, Hong Kong, Norway and will open a new college next year in India.

The UWC students are chosen on merit regardless of race, creed, colour, back-

ground or financial ability, and the majority are awarded scholarship.

Earlier at the International Labour Organisation Headquarters in Geneva, Queen Noor met with the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Dr. Cornelio Sommaruga.

The Queen, who with His Majesty King Hussein is a President of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society, discussed current issues facing the Red Crescent in Jordan, particularly the future Red Crescent Hospital in Amman, as well as ICRC's cooperation with the Noor Al Hussein Foundation.

Regent urges cabinet to speed up amendment process on JESORS law

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Prince Faisal Bin Al Hussein, the Regent, Saturday urged the cabinet to move swiftly on a draft amendment to the Jordan Economic and Social Organisation for Retired Servicemen (JESORS) law that would improve living conditions and open up new opportunities for this segment of society.

Addressing a regular session of cabinet, Prince Faisal, reiterated His Majesty King Hussein's concern for the well-being of retired servicemen.

In a letter to the Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali last week the King said retired officers offered distinguished service to the country and they deserve appreciation.

He added that he was looking forward to seeing the draft amendment to the law finalised and enforced as soon as possible.

During the cabinet session the ministers reviewed the draft amendment to the JESORS law, presented

their views and suggested ways to create job opportunities for the retired officers in economic, commercial and agricultural arenas.

After the meeting Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi told the press that the ministers also reviewed a study for financing a water project which a French firm last February pledged to conduct in conjunction with the Jordan Valley Authority.

The project involves utilising water resources for irrigation in the south Jordan Valley region and the construction of the Mujib Dam which is covered under a French-Jordanian financial protocol signed in May 1995.

The protocol provides for technical assistance to Jordan worth 500,000 francs.

The cabinet also endorsed a draft agreement on tourism between Jordan and Cyprus and authorised Jordan's ambassador to Greece to sign the related documents.



HRH Prince Faisal Bin Al Hussein, the Regent, Saturday presides over a regular cabinet session (Petra photo)

In addition the cabinet approved a three-year sports protocol between Jordan and Cyprus which was signed last April. Saturday's cabinet session was attended by Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid.

Deputies strongly criticise U.S. House resolution on Jerusalem

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament Saturday strongly criticised U.S. House of Representatives' resolution last week which considers Jerusalem as the united capital of Israel.

The Lower House, represented by Speaker Saad Hayel Srour, said the move by U.S. congresspersons was aimed at aborting the Middle East peace process.

"We view with deep concern and astonishment the U.S. House of Representatives' resolution which can only be interpreted as placing additional obstacles and difficulties in the path of the Middle East peace process which is currently facing a serious deadlock," Mr. Srour said.

"Describing the resolution, which is non-binding, as lacking wisdom, openly contradicting basic international rules of legitimacy and disregarding the objectives of the peace process, Mr. Srour said the Lower House 'calls on all peace loving forces on the Arab, regional and international fronts to support His Majesty King Hussein's stand in defence of Jerusalem and the holy places as well as the rights of the Palestinians in their national homeland.'"

King Hussein Friday said that the resolution undermined the U.S. role in the peace process and he called on President Bill Clinton to reaffirm that Arab Jerusalem is an occupied territory and urged



Saad Hayel Srour

and Islamic countries to raise their voices in protest against this American flagrant aggression and reassert the Arab city as the capital of the Palestinian state.

Meanwhile, the higher coordination committee for the Jordanian opposition political parties issued a statement Saturday condemning the U.S. House of Representatives' resolution as the utmost provocation and a show of enmity and a biased stand on the part of the United States levelled against the Arab, Islamic and Palestinian people's interests.

The statement urged the Jordanian government to halt all forms of official normalisation with Israel and withdraw. Jordan's ambassador from Tel Aviv, saying that the American resolution means the demise of the American sponsored peace process.

The Palestine National Council (PNC) Saturday issued a statement describing the U.S. House resolution as contradicting international legitimacy and all conventions.

"This announcement is meaningless and null and void since individual countries' decisions can by no means contravene international conventions and resolutions," the statement said.

"This announcement is unwise and unjust and is bound to adversely affect the peace process and destabilise the region," it added.

Total Israeli withdrawal, full implementation of peace accords are prerequisites to successful peace — Rifai

By Lima Nabil
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Senate Speaker Zeid Rifai Saturday said peace in the Middle East can only be achieved after Israel withdraws from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the occupied Syrian Golan and South Lebanon, and the present Israeli government implements the peace accords concluded under the previous government.

In a lecture to participants in the International Leadership Programme of the United Nations University/International Leadership Academy, Mr. Rifai, a former prime minister, reaffirmed Jordan's stand on Arab Jerusalem saying it should be the capital of the Palestinian state.

He said peace cannot be imposed or dictated but must be achieved through the desire and participation of all concerned parties.

He added that the Palestinians should not be left alone in the negotiations with the Israelis.

"President Chirac of France told His Majesty King Hussein that he is going to discuss with the European leaders what Europe can do in order to

revive the peace process, and this would be done not to replace the role of the United States but rather to support it," Mr. Rifai said.

The Senate speaker said "Egypt has been very active as you know, and we have supported the Egyptian, European and U.S. roles because we believe that war is not an option, and there is no alternative to peace. Peace means negotiations and agreement. We need to use all the tools available to us and all the international pressure that is possible to get Israel to accept that it can not have peace when it insists on annexing territories, building settlements and expansions, and acts as the victor, dictating its wishes on the vanquished simply because the Palestinians are the weaker negotiating party."

Mr. Rifai said that among the main challenges facing the countries of the region is the water shortage.

He stressed that it is a regional problem requiring the cooperation of all parties in finding solutions.

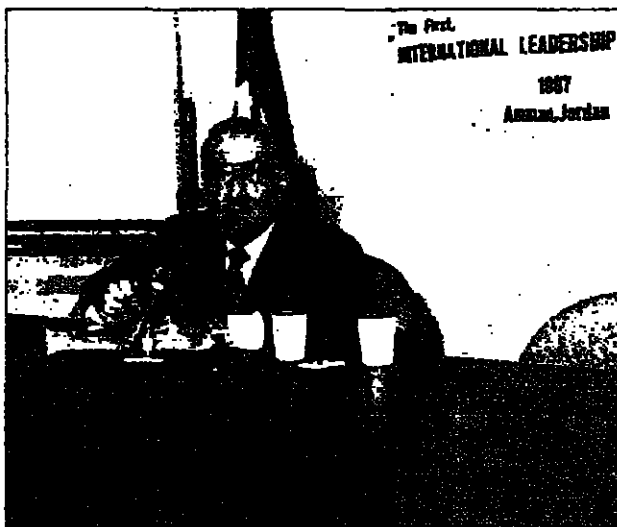
He also criticised the U.S. House of Representatives' resolution recognising Jerusalem as the united capital of Israel. Mr. Rifai

said Jerusalem is an occupied city, and it is the capital of the Palestinian state.

He referred to Iraq by voicing his total opposition to the continued embargo on the Iraqi people and stressing that Baghdad has complied with all U.N. resolutions and the sanctions should be lifted so that the Iraqi people's suffering can end.

In his lecture, Mr. Rifai said, "Jordan believes that the effort to build bridges between the states of the region and from that region to the world is a commendable and worthy role for any country to undertake. A peaceful cooperative, development-oriented vision of the region's future is important in itself, but our area is painfully in need of something far more concrete. What we need is a plan of action, and we need a comprehensive regional security system."

Referring to the peace dividends expected from the peace process he said: "What we hope will emerge at the end of our continuous and forthright talks with the Israelis is an intra-regional security mechanism both comprehensive and regionally specific. It is for this



Senate Speaker Zeid Rifai Saturday lectures at the International Leadership Programme (Petra photo)

reason that we have always called for the establishment of a security regime which would involve all regional parties without exclusion and address all issues without exception."

"To our thinking, such a regional system must be at once cooperative and open, embracing a diverse range of issues and countries while continuing to maintain its stated purpose as an all-inclusive security platform," said Mr. Rifai.

But he said that such a system must emphasise legality and relations between states as well as democratisation.

"Jordan has therefore embarked wholeheartedly upon the path of democratisation," he emphasised.

He said after a comprehensive peace has been negotiated, all the states of the Middle East can begin to work together to fulfil the common potential.

News in Brief

Prince pushes for environmental awareness

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, the chief chamberlain, Saturday visited the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment where he stressed the need to spread public awareness about environmental problems and what can be done on the individual and community level to stem degradation. In particular, Prince Ra'd called for educating the new generation about environmental issues. The Prince was briefed on projects by Minister of Municipal Affairs Tawfiq Khreishan.

Jordan offers assistance to Abu Dhabi

AMMAN (Petra) — Head of the Audit Bureau Abed Kharabshah Saturday met with Jamil Janno, a senior official of the Abu Dhabi Audit Bureau. In discussing scopes of cooperation, Dr. Kharabshah said Jordan was ready to extend assistance to the Gulf state's bureau.

Business team heads for Canada

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing Jordanian businessmen heads for Canada today (Sunday) to hold joint venture talks with Canadian counterparts.

JORDAN-MOLDAVIA TALKS: Acting Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour on Saturday receives a Moldavia delegation headed by Diakov Dimitro, deputy speaker of Moldavia's Lower House of Parliament.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral relations and suggestions on how these ties could be advanced in various spheres. Particular emphasis was placed on exploring scopes of collaboration in economic and trade sectors. Also they reviewed the latest developments in the peace process, the problems inherent in the stalled talks and other issues of common concern (Petra photo)



Authorities execute convicted murderer

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A 26-year-old man convicted of murder was hanged at Sawqa prison south of Amman at dawn Saturday.

Muntasser Rajab Abu Zeid was sentenced to death by the Criminal Court in November 1996 for the Dec. 3, 1994 murder of Anwar Ahmad Hassan in a cemetery in the Baqqa Refugee Camp.

Court transcripts said that Abu Zeid shot and killed Mr. Hassan after hearing from friends that Mr. Hassan was involved in an extra-marital affair with his mother-in-law.

Abu Zeid was apprehended by authorities eight months after the murder was committed, when one of Abu Zeid's friends informed the authorities.

2 more executions set for today

Two other men are expected to be executed at dawn today in the same prison for the murder of a 22-year-old man in the Jordan Valley in October 1995. They are Mohammad

Mahmoud Asswan, 38, and Kaboud Hamdan Rasslan, 20, both Egyptian nationals.

The two were sentenced to death by the Criminal Court in December 1996. They were found guilty of murdering their colleague Jamal Mohammad Abu Zeinab, 22, in a farm in Ghor Safi on Oct. 3, 1994.

According to court documents, all three men worked together at the farm, and one month before the incident, "Asswan and Rasslan started encountering problems with the victim over \$3, a gas cylinder and a knife, and they plotted to kill him."

On the night of the murder, the court said, the two men carrying shovels, went to the house where the victim lived and both struck him several times on the head.

The two then dragged his body to a nearby farm and tried to conceal it with shrubs.

A Royal Decree was issued last month approving the death sentence. The court said the two men were the victims of their own greed.

PLAY

"Adam... Alone" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

LECTURE

"Lecture on art by artists Hana Malallah and Suhail Sami (with commentary by Dr. Khalid Khreis) at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts at 6:00 p.m. (Tel. 630128).

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

"Paintings by contemporary Iraqi artists entitled 'Ecology and Environment in Iraqi Art' at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until July 12 (except Thursdays).

"Photo exhibition of Hong Kong, sponsored by the Chinese embassy, at the Royal Cultural Centre, until June 19.

"Works by Abdul Basit Naqqash and Sa'd Hussein entitled 'Heritage and Culture' at the gallery of the Jordan

Plastic Artists Association, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 21.

"Art exhibition by Ibrahim Al Abdali at the Orient Art Gallery, Shmeisani, Issam Ajlouni Street, until June 19.

"Paintings by Yassin Shakir at Hamourabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5536098), until June 15.

"Works by Guy Ferrer at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 15.

"Spring Exhibition of Plastic Art '97 at Greater Amman Municipality, Ras Al 'Ain, until June 30.

"One-of-a-Kind, artists' book exhibit, at the American Centre, Abdoun, until June 25.

"Exhibition of works by Farouq Lambaz at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 19.

World Trade Centre blast film to carry disclaimer

NEW YORK (R) — Makers of a television film about the World Trade Centre bombing said Friday protests had led them to add a disclaimer that the bombing "does not reflect the beliefs of the majority of Muslims and Arabs."

A spokesman for Home Box Office said it was trying to be sensitive to the concerns of Arab-Americans. But an Arab-American group that monitors discrimination rejected the disclaimer, charging that the film was full of stereotypes.

Path To Paradise: The Untold Story Of The World Trade Centre Bombing, recounts the FBI investigation into the Feb. 26, 1993 bombing that killed six people and injured over 1,000. It premieres on the HBO Cable Network Saturday night.

The film shows how a small group of Muslim extremists plotted to blow up the World Trade Centre and charges that U.S. government agencies declined to pay an informant who might have tipped them off to the disaster. It also shows how two extremists were allowed into the country by lax immigration officials.

The producers, who consulted with representatives of the Arab-American community during filming, will roll a message at the end of the movie saying: "While based upon actual events, this film portrays the actions of a small group of individuals. It does not reflect the beliefs of the majority of Muslims and Arabs."

Sam Hussein, a spokesman for the 20,000-member American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, said that during consulta-

tions the group gave the filmmakers many suggestions for improving on the script's "unending parade of negative Arab and Muslim stereotypes."

He described HBO's disclaimer as unacceptable. "It's preposterous. If they didn't want to engage in stereotypes, they should have come out with a different film."

"This movie will have real-life consequences. It will increase hate crimes; harassment of children and job discrimination," he said.

The committee is creating an intolerance award, of which HBO will be the first recipient.

An HBO spokesman said the movie's producers had gone out of their way to solicit and listen to comments from the Arab-American community. For exam-

ple, he said, several characters were made to say that the bombing was the work of "extremists."

"There are no inaccuracies, no disrespect. If this film were fiction, people could say, 'why did you have Arabs as villains?' and that would be a legitimate concern. But when you're dealing with facts, it's a different story. This is a film about the World Trade Centre bombing. Not about Arabs and Muslims," the spokesman said.

Four Muslim militants were sentenced to 235 years in prison for the World Trade Centre bombing, and 13 others were convicted at a second trial on charges of plotting to blow up New York City landmarks and assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.



A man identified as Khmer Rouge defence chief Son Sen is shown brutally murdered in a photograph released on June 14. Cambodian deputy chief of general staff Nhiek Bun Chhay said Saturday that Khmer Rouge supreme Pol Pot had murdered Son Sen, his wife and 10 other family members and showed pictures of the dead bodies (Reuters photo)

4 held after fire kills 57 in India

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian police have arrested four managers of a cinema where 57 people died in a fire for suspected criminal negligence, a senior official said Saturday.

Deputy Police Commissioner Maxwell Pereira said more people were expected to be detained following the fire which broke out Friday afternoon in the packed Uphaar Grand movie theatre in the capital.

"We have arrested four people from the cinema's management," Commissioner Pereira told Reuters. "More arrests are likely."

He said police had registered cases against the four for criminal negligence causing grievous hurt, causing deaths due to criminal negligence and use of combustible materials. The four were to be arraigned in a Delhi court Saturday.

Commissioner Pereira said a small fire had broken out Friday morning in an electrical transformer which hours later exploded in flames during the premiere of the new Hindi movie

Border, which dramatises a 1971 battle between India and Pakistan.

"We will have to see to what extent the transformer was repaired," the police official said.

The company which owns the cinema, Ansal Properties, confirmed there was a small fire in the transformer in the morning, but said the city's electricity board had assured the managers that it had been repaired and was safe.

"There is absolutely no criminal negligence on our side," Ansal spokesman R. Gurumoorthy told Reuters. Officials of the Delhi Electricity Board could not be reached for comment.

Most of the victims were trapped in the balcony and suffocated when poisonous smoke engulfed the theatre, which was packed to its capacity of 1,050 seats, Commissioner Pereira said.

He said the death toll, which late Friday had been set at 58, had been revised down to 57. A police spokesman said 91 people were injured.

The transformer was in the basement of the 24-year-old cinema in an affluent South Delhi neighbourhood.

"It generated tremendous heat in the entire cable system and the sound-proofing in the walls, which had combustible material, began to smoulder," Commissioner Pereira said.

"Smoke began collecting in any available space, and by the time the fire broke out, all the escape routes were blocked."

Witnesses described horrific scenes. "I saw women with children in their arms breaking windows, and jumping out. It was unbelievable," said one.

"People in the balcony tried to rush into the toilets. The doors to the exits, first would not open, and when they did, billowing smoke poured through," Commissioner Pereira said.

Fire service authorities had recently inspected the cinema and certified that it satisfied safety regulations, Commissioner Pereira said.

China slams European criticism on Hong Kong, human rights

BEIJING (R) — China's parliament Saturday slammed the European Parliament for what it called a baseless attack on Beijing's policies on human rights and Hong Kong, warning that the criticism had poisoned ties.

"We would like to seriously demand these people in the European Parliament that they should discard the cold war mentality, conform to the trend of the times and do something useful for the healthy development of China-Europe relations," the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress, or Parliament, said in a statement.

The European Parliament Thursday urged the European Union to maintain its arms embargo imposed on China after the brutal 1989 army crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrations in Beijing, attacking what it called China's abuse of human rights.

The EU's assembly urged closer trade ties with China while criticising Beijing's planned disbanding of Hong Kong's legislature, its "occupation of Tibet," its role in developing nuclear arms in Pakistan, supply of chemical and weapons to Iran and support for Burma's military government.

"This resolution adopted by the European Parliament has poisoned the atmosphere of China-Europe relations and thus disrupted their normal development," China's parliament said in a statement published in the official People's Daily.

"The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress hereby expresses its utmost indignation at the anti-China clamour of this resolution."

China hit back at the charges, saying its European counterpart had no right to interfere in Beijing's internal affairs and accusing some members of being mired in colonialist ideas and opposed to a strong China.

"In the areas of human rights, Tibet, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau and other questions, this represents gross interference in China's internal affairs," the statement said.

It lashed out at the criticism over Hong Kong, a British colony which reverts to Chinese sovereignty on July 1. Portuguese-run Macau returns to Chinese rule in 1999.

"It is just over 10 days before China resumes the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong... No one can stop China from becoming reunified, prosperous and powerful," it said.

Pol Pot said surrounded in Northwest Cambodia

PHNOM PENH (R) — Reviled Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot is holed up in the jungle east of the guerrillas' northern stronghold and about 1,000 breakaway rebels are closing in on his position, a senior Cambodian military official said Saturday.

Deputy Chief of General Staff Nhiek Bun Chhay told a news conference that Mr. Pol Pot was in rough jungle terrain about 20 kilometres east of Anlong Veng with about 250 to 300 fighters and their families. At least three senior Khmer Rouge officials were being held as hostages.

Some 1,000 Khmer Rouge fighters who had broken with Mr. Pol Pot and defected to the government had surrounded the group, he said.

Mr. Pol Pot fled Anlong Veng after murdering his Defence Chief Son Sen and 11 of his family members on June 10, Gen. Nhiek Bun Chhay said, echoing an announcement made by First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh Friday.

He said missing Briton Christopher Howes was also with the group. Mr. Howes and his Cambodian translator, Houn Hourth, were abducted on March 26 last year while conducting mine clearance operations in Northern Cambodia.

None of the reports could be independently confirmed. Analysts believe the Khmer Rouge has been split apart, but many are sceptical about the specific reports on Mr. Pol Pot and have warned against a possible misinformation campaign.

The shadowy leader, who reigned over Cambodia's "killing fields" as one of this century's most infamous figures, has not been seen in public since 1979 and rumours about his health and whereabouts often pop up and are quashed.

A Thai businessman whose employees were in the area of Anlong Veng Friday told Reuters he understood the situation there was normal.

Nhiek Bun Chhay said he was basing his reports on Khmer Rouge sources he had spoken to around Anlong Veng. He returned from the area late Friday but deferred comment on what he had learned there until after briefing Prince Ranariddh.

Cambodian Second Prime Minister Hun Sen confirmed to reporters that Son Sen and his family members had been killed but was not convinced that Mr. Pol Pot was the murderer.

He also said he did not believe that Mr. Pol Pot had taken his top comrades, including front man and nominal leader Khieu Samphan, hostage and urged caution, calling the situation "very dangerous."

"I don't believe Khieu Samphan is a hostage of Pol Pot because Khieu Samphan served Pol Pot for a long time," Mr. Hun Sen said. Mr. Khieu Samphan is president of the guerrillas' provisional government.

More than one million people died during the Khmer Rouge's brutal 1975-79 reign over Cambodia through executions, starvation, disease and hard labour.

The Maoist movement, which reneged on a 1991 peace pact meant to end Cambodia's long history of conflict, has been fighting the coalition government formed following U.N. polls in 1993.

But it has been decimated by thousands of defections since last August, and fewer than 2,000 hardcore fighters are thought to remain.

Gen. Nhiek Bun Chhay produced enlarged photographs of dead bodies which looked like Khmer Rouge Defence Chief Son Sen, his wife Yun Yat and other family members said to have been murdered.

One photograph showed a bloody man who Gen. Nhiek Bun Chhay said was Son Sen, his face frozen in a grimace and a bullet hole in his head.

Another showed the crumpled corpse of a woman Gen. Nhiek Bun Chhay said was Son Sen's wife in a pool of blood. Others showed more bodies sprawled in the forest, some with deep head wounds.

He said Mr. Pol Pot had taken right-hand man Nuon Chea and northern commander Ta Mok hostage as well.

Mr. Pol Pot also destroyed the rebels' link with the outside world — their clandestine radio station, he said.

Gen. Nhiek Bun Chhay said the government and the breakaway rebels now surrounding Mr. Pol Pot wanted him taken alive.

It was not immediately known who, if anyone, was leading the breakaway rebels in their offensive.

Mr. Hun Sen told reporters he had no immediate plans to assist.

"We are sitting on a high mountain looking down on the two tigers until they become seriously wounded and then they will be easily captured," Mr. Hun Sen said.

Mr. Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh, who formed an uneasy coalition after the 1993 polls, are locked in a political battle for supremacy ahead of new elections due in 1998 in which the Khmer Rouge could play a key part.

Analysts said the Cambodian government could want to make it appear that Khmer Rouge leaders had disappeared in order to make a peace agreement with the rebels more palatable.

"I'm sceptical. Pol Pot is well-liked by his commanders and soldiers. I don't see any reason why this would happen," said one observer of the Khmer Rouge, adding: "It's unlikely he fled."

India to deploy missiles only if attacked

NEW DELHI (R) — India would deploy Prithvi ballistic missiles only if Pakistan attacked, a cabinet minister has said.

"India has developed Prithvi missiles for (the) country's protection from an attack," Defence Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav was quoted by the Press Trust of India (PTI) as saying.

"If Pakistan attacks India, then only will we deploy

these missiles to repulse the attack," he said Friday.

Last week, the Washington Post cited U.S. intelligence saying that India had moved fewer than a dozen of the medium-range, surface-to-surface missiles to a prospective launch site near the border with Pakistan.

Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral Wednesday said no Prithvis had been deployed. The Hindu newspaper said India had

stored, but not deployed, the missiles near Pakistan.

The newspaper reports prompted a stern reaction from Pakistan and raised questions ahead of the resumption of bilateral peace talks next week.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan accused India Thursday of raising tensions before the fourth round of bilateral peace talks in Islamabad starting on June 19.

China's women still face uphill struggle

BEIJING (AFP) — China's women are slowly rising in status, but still face enormous difficulties, ranging from feudal oppression to unemployment and the restructuring of state enterprises, a survey showed.

"Because the social and economic situations are changing fast women's rights are not fully protected and in some places are seriously violated," said the survey, carried overnight by the Xinhua News Agency.

"Women may be especially hard-hit by the wave of reforms to unprofitable state enterprises," it said, pointing out that women were routinely laid off before their male colleagues.

The survey was conducted by the Civil and Judicial Affairs Committee under the National People's Congress (NPC).

The restructuring of state-run firms, which the government has promised to speed up this year, is threatening some 20 million jobs, or almost one in five.

And according to official statistics, 60 per cent of state employees sacked so far have been women, despite the fact they represent about 45 per cent of China's urban workforce.

Women also have to fight harder than men to gain positions of responsibility in both state and public sectors.

"The gender gap still exists," said the survey, whose results were presented to top rights activist Chen Muhua, vice president of the NPC standing committee of the All-China Women's

province of Guangdong, Shanxi in the north, and Sichuan in the southwest.

In Shanxi, a breakthrough has been reached with the appointments of a female city party chief, a female mayor and a female head of the prefectural people's congress, the report said.

But just as women must struggle to survive in the modern workplace, they are also accorded second-class status by ancient feudal practices such as bigamy.

"Some of China's own backward customs should be reformed," Mrs. Chen told Xinhua.

"The ongoing national move to promote ethical and cultural progress should also focus on the issues of bigamy and extra-marital affairs, for they are serious moral and social problems," she was quoted as saying.

Marital violence, kidnapping of women for prostitution or marriage to peasants who cannot afford dowries are still commonplace.

The number of cases, however, has subsided somewhat since the launch last year of the nationwide "strike hard" anti-crime campaign.

"Guangdong province sentenced 79.6 per cent of the criminals convicted of cruelly injuring or killing women to five or more years in prison, or even execution, in accordance with the law," the report said.

Between 1990 and 1995, some 90,000 women and children were liberated from sexual or marital slavery, according to official statistics.

Among suggested solutions to the plight of women, parliament has called for creating a quota of female employees of state firms.

Mrs. Chen also called for a programme to highlight the difficulties faced by women.

"The key segment of those to be educated should be officials of the male sex," she said.

Chechen president signs customs accord

MOSCOW (AFP) — Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov has put his signature to a Chechen-Russian customs accord, ITAR-TASS news agency reported Saturday.

Under the terms of the agreement the Russian Customs Committee will establish a representative office in the breakaway Chechen Republic while the Chechen Customs Committee will open a similar office in Russia.

The document also provides for giving Grozny's Sheikh Mansur Airport international status, something the Chechens have been pushing for. This would mean that planes out of Grozny could fly beyond Russia.

Preliminary work on that transition is due to be completed by July 1.

Chechenya's political status remains unresolved after the war in which Russian troops made a complete

withdrawal after failing to crush the independence forces during 21 months of heavy fighting that ended in August last year.

Tens of thousands of people were killed and much of the republic of about one million people was destroyed.

Meanwhile, a Russian Interior Ministry helicopter came under fire from the Chechen side when flying along the border between Chechenya and Dagestan, ITAR-TASS news agency reported Saturday.

ITAR-TASS said that the helicopter was flying above Dagestan territory inspecting the border when it came under fire in the area of the Pervomayskoye settlement.

The helicopter was hit 11 times and had to make an emergency landing, but nobody was hurt in the incident.

Chechen authorities denied any involvement in the shooting.

Chechen Vice-President Vakha Arsanov said that the border section where the incident took place does not have armed units capable of shelling aircraft.

"We have no need to shell a Russian helicopter on Russian territory," Mr. Arsanov stated.

Russian Interior Ministry officials are carrying out an investigation into the incident and are searching for the individuals responsible for the attack.

In a separate development, the Chechen national security chief said Saturday two Russian journalists kidnapped in Chechenya this week are being held by the gang that recently released four other journalists after three months of captivity.

Lecha Khulygov told Interfax News Agency that the kidnappers accused one of the journalists abducted Wednesday, Ilya Bogaty-

rov, of failing to hand over a ransom for the four other Russian journalists.

Mr. Bogatyrov and his colleague Vladislav Chernyayev, both working for the VID television production company, were snatched in the centre of the capital Grozny, Mr. Khulygov said earlier.

The other four — an ITAR-TASS correspondent and three journalists working for Radio Russia — were released on June 6.

Their employers said the releases were secured through negotiations and a security crackdown by Chechen police, and that no ransom was paid.

A further three journalists from the Russian independent television company NTV, including a prize-winning Chechenya correspondent, are still being held by unknown abductors in the devastated breakaway republic in the North Caucasus.

Bosnian court rejects war crimes retrial for Serb

SARAJEVO (R) — A Bosnian court has rejected a call for the retrial of a Serb soldier convicted of killing two Muslim brothers who were recently found alive.

Sretko Damjanovic was convicted of killing Kasim and Asim Blekic and four other Muslims in a much-publicised war crimes trial in 1993. His lawyer Branko Maric found the Blekic brothers alive and filed a retrial motion in December 1996.

"The court rejected my retrial motion as unfounded," Mr. Damjanovic's lawyer, Mr. Maric, told Reuters Saturday, after being notified of the court decision earlier this week.

"The court's decision confirmed that the brothers are alive but nevertheless stated that it does not qualify to bring a release or a conviction for a lesser crime," he added.

Mr. Maric argued in his motion that the prevailing evidence to convict his client for genocide was another Serb soldier's testimony, who was

on trial with Mr. Damjanovic. The discovery that the brothers are alive puts that testimony in doubt, he said.

The Sarajevo court decision said that while the Blekic brothers' appearance could influence the sentence, it would not change the verdict of genocide.

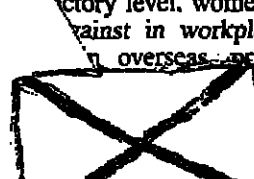
Mr. Damjanovic and Borisav Herak were found guilty of genocide and crimes against civilians and prisoners of war while fighting for Serb forces around Sarajevo in 1992. They were

sentenced to death but the sentence was not carried out.

Mr. Herak confessed to killing Muslim civilians and prisoners of war and to multiple rapes. He testified that Mr. Damjanovic killed the Blekic brothers in April 1992 and joined him in raping and looting.

Mr. Damjanovic admitted all charges during the investigation but withdrew his confession at the trial, claiming it was beaten out of him and showing scarred ribs as evidence.

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The 47-foot skeleton of the Giganotosaurus, the largest meat-eating dinosaur ever discovered, is unveiled for the first time to the world at The Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia Friday. The new creature, estimated at 45-47 feet in length when it roamed the earth 100 million years ago, eclipses the Tyrannosaurus Rex as the largest meat-eating dinosaur ever known (Reuter photo)

New dinosaur king reigns in U.S. museum

PHILADELPHIA (R) — The usurper to the title "King of the Dinosaurs" took its place of honour in a Philadelphia museum Friday and left T. Rex skulking in the background.

The first reconstructed skeleton of a Giganotosaurus, a fearsome, flesh-ripping predator whose bones were discovered in Argentina in 1993, went on display at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

The dinosaur was an estimated 14 metres long and weighed about eight tonnes when it roamed what is now South America about 100 million years ago. It eclipses Tyrannosaurus Rex as the largest meat-eating dinosaur ever known.

"It deserves that title," museum paleontologist Ted Daeschler said of the new dinosaur. "That's hard to talk about scientifically but certainly in the public eye," he said.

The Giganotosaurus ske-

leton — a resin casting of the fossil bones, which remain in Argentina — is on permanent display, looming over the ticket counter in the academy's entry hall.

Its rear legs are spread in a stalking stance and its head is low on an outstretched neck, as if looking for something to gobble.

Nearby in the museum's dinosaur hall is the T. Rex skeleton, still imposing but now looking like a younger — by about 30 million years — sibling of the new attraction.

The two dinosaurs were roughly similar in appearance, with tall rear legs, tiny forelegs, large heads and big teeth.

But the Giganotosaurus, whose name means "giant southern reptile," had three fingers or toes on each limb, compared with T. Rex's two.

Its head was relatively narrow, and it had daggerlike teeth, as opposed to the wider skull and conical, bone-

crushing teeth of T. Rex.

Scientists speculate that T. Rex was a scavenger, while the Giganotosaurus hunted live prey, possibly even the 30-metre-long plant-eating dinosaurs it lived alongside.

"You have potentially two different lifestyles here," Phelan Fretz, the museum's director, said.

The dinosaurs were members of different families and were widely separated by age and geography. T. Rex lived around 65 million years ago and lorded over North America.

The gap makes their superficial similarity all the more interesting, Mr. Daeschler said. "It was a successful design," he said.

Asked a question certain to seize the imagination of many dinosaur fans — which of the beasts would prevail in a clash of the titans? — Mr. Fretz and Mr. Daeschler offered differing opinions.

Mr. Daeschler said T. Rex, which is thought to be smar-

ter, might prevail by using his heavier head as a battering ram. Mr. Fretz said a fight between "the cuisinart and the bone-crusher" might go to the Giganotosaurus by virtue of its overall size advantage and "razor-sharp attack teeth."

Both men accompanied their guesses with disclaimers that such a battle could not have occurred in real life and that scientists don't really study such issues, at least during working hours.

"I don't think any scientific journal wants to publish on which would win a battle, so we'll leave it up to the kids, for the most part," Mr. Daeschler said. "But it might be really fun to get some scientists together with some kids and talk it out."

Eleven-year-old Derek Coates, attending the unveiling ceremony Friday evening, had no doubt as to the outcome. "Giganotosaurus would win," he said. "It's bigger, more bloodthirsty."

Albright argues for 'radical' vision for women

WASHINGTON (R) — Madeleine Albright, the first woman to serve as U.S. Secretary of State, has outlined what she called a "radical" vision for equal rights for women around the globe.

"We ... share a vision," Mrs. Albright told the Women's Legal Defence Fund in Washington. "A vision of a world in which every girl can look ahead with confidence that her life will be valued, her individuality respected, her rights protected and her future deter-

mined by her own abilities and character."

"There are some, I guess, who would call that radical. And they are right," she said in prepared remarks.

Mrs. Albright acknowledged that progress towards that vision had been slow, but argued that it was at least faster than it had been in previous generations.

However, she said that for women to contribute to their full potential in the next century, they would require "equal access, equal rights, equal protection and a fair

chance at the levers of economic and political power."

"This isn't rocket science, or something that is even more difficult, like child-rearing," Mrs. Albright said. "It is simple common sense."

She decried abuses against women around the world, ranging from domestic violence to dowry murders to mutilation to forcing young girls into prostitution.

"Some say all this is cultural, and there's nothing we can do about it. I say it's criminal and we each have a responsibility to stop it,"

Mrs. Albright said.

She said she wanted to bring women's concerns into the mainstream of U.S. foreign policy, and highlighted three areas of high priority in her dealings with the U.S. Congress: Reform and full funding of international aid programmes, including those run by the United Nations, full funding for international family planning programmes, and ratification of the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Protestants confirm N. Irish march plan

BELFAST (R) — The pro-British Orange Order formally signalled its intention Friday to repeat a march through an Irish Catholic area that last year triggered widespread violence in Northern Ireland.

A police spokesman said the exclusively Protestant marching brotherhood had given the required three-week notice of its intention to hold a procession in the town of Portadown.

Catholics, who regard the annual July 6 parade as offensive and anti-Irish, say they will hold a musical "street festival" along the route in their Garvaghy Road enclave.

The developments dampened hopes of an early end to tension dogging the British province's traditionally turbulent summer "marching season" when thousands of Protestants hold parades across the province to celebrate ancient links with Britain.

The Orange Order says some of the region's Catholic residents groups are manipulated by militant Irish Republicans, and it refuses to speak to them. Denying the charge, the groups are demanding face-to-face discussions.

Despite protracted acrimony, Portadown Orangemen and Catholics recently exchanged open letters and

arms-length mediation efforts are under way to reach a compromise.

"We can confirm that we have received notification from the Portadown district L.O.L. (Loyal Orange Lodge) in respect of their parade to and from Drumcree Parish Church Sunday July 6," said a Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) police spokesman.

"The notified route is the same as in previous years, and as is widely known the matter is still the subject of discussions between many interested parties."

The "street festival" is likely to bring Catholics on to the road when the Protestants are due to march past as they return to Portadown from a church service at outlying Drumcree.

Catholic residents leader Brendan MacCionnaith denied that the festival plan was a provocative action.

"It is probably the least non-confrontational protest you could possibly organise," Mr. MacCionnaith told Reuters.

He said residents would invite U.S., British and Irish parliamentarians and human rights activists as observers.

The Portadown march has become a focal point of annual wrangling between Protestants and Catholics over the marches.

Sri Lanka rebels reportedly throw girls into frontline

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels have thrown hundreds of girls into the frontline in recent attacks on government troops, soldiers were quoted as saying Saturday.

The Independent Island newspaper quoted soldiers wounded in the on-going operation "Jaya Sikuru" of "Sure Of Victory," as saying teenage girls took part in this week's attack on the military's forward positions near the northern town of Vavuniya.

K.G. Dharmawana, who lost his right leg below the knee, said he was in the inner defence line when a large number of rebels began attacking with mortars and artillery guns.

"Under the very intense fighting I had to abandon my bunker and withdraw to the next nearest one, from where I saw more than 60 Tiger girls creeping into the bunker where I was a short while ago," Mr. Dharmawana said from his hospital bed in Colombo.

"I had a mortar launcher with me and I fired three mortars. I believe more than 40 of the Tigers were killed."

The Defence Ministry has said that more than 1,000 Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels mounted a raid on military positions near Vavuniya Tuesday in an attempt to destroy the army's field headquarters and capture artillery.

Vavuniya is 220 kilometres north of the capital Colombo. "Hundreds of little LTTE girls were withdrawing while attacking and setting the jungle on fire to stop our advance," said soldier A.M.G. Wijaya Bandara, who was involved in a battle with the rebels a day before the attack near Vavuniya.

The LTTE have a large number of women cadres, mostly teenage girls, who fight alongside their male counterparts in battles against the army. The rebel naval wing also has women.

About 20,000 troops launched operation "Jaya Sikuru" through the bush jungles of the Wanni region last month to open a crucial highway linking Vavuniya to the Jaffna peninsula, 100 kilometres further north.

The troops, moving from two flanks, captured key rebel towns of Omaniathi, north of Vavuniya, and Nedunkeni, northeast of Vavuniya, before being hit in the rear by the rebels. Military officials said the army's death toll in the raid was expected to be around 140. The LTTE, fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east, have said more than 300 soldiers were killed along with 50 rebels.

Kabul returns to calm after overnight bombing raid

CHARIKAR (AFP) — Kabul was calm Saturday following an overnight bombing raid by an opposition jet with no action reported from the northern frontlines.

Late Friday a jet swooped low over Kabul to drop at least one powerful bomb, which locals said exploded in or around the airport on the northern city limits.

There was no immediate official report about casualties or damage, but Kabul Airport was not closed to civilian traffic Saturday.

The bomb-blast and staccato anti-aircraft fire was a grim reminder to the slumbering capital that while the first over Kabul in months, it was presumably carried out by the anti-Taliban alliance flying from a northern Afghan base under the control of ethnic Uzbek General Abdul Malik.

Last May Gen. Malik mutinied in support of the Taliban, but later switched sides again to rejoin with

opposition Commander Ahmad Shah Masood, and the Shiite Hezb-i-Wahdat faction leader Karim Khalili.

No action was witnessed on the frontlines around Jabal Os-Siraj 77 kilometres north of Kabul Saturday, where the Taliban and Mr. Masood's forces now appear to have reached a stalemate.

There was neither an exchange of artillery fire nor any infantry activity on this frontline midday, but this may have been because of the raw summer's heat.

Taliban were seen on hill-top posts guarding the entrance to the Ghorband Valley, which further west at the strategic Shibar Pass is under the control of Mr. Khalili's Hezb-i-Wahdat.

Just south of the mouth of the Ghorband Valley, the bazaar of Parwan provincial capital Charikar, 65 kilometres north of Kabul, was shuttered and looked abandoned, although it was not entirely void of civic activi-

ty. Several hundred men carrying spades were seen by journalists marching out of Charikar to repair vital irrigation canals. Locals said the city was now without water and electricity.

The Taliban have warned locals to evacuate Charikar and surrounding areas to avoid the potential dangers of coming battle.

It is not clear what strategy Mr. Masood has in mind regarding Kabul, but frontline Taliban stated their goal is to retake Jabal Os-Siraj, and neighbouring Gulbahaar which guards the entrance to the Panjshir Valley.

The Panjshir is Mr. Masood's native place, where he gained fame as a guerrilla commander during the Soviet Union's 1979-89 occupation of Afghanistan.

In the north of Afghanistan there has been no news of the Taliban force that evacuated Pul-i-Khumri centre under pressure from opposition forces to neigh-

bouring Baghlan City, under control of Commander Bashir.

Unconfirmed claims by opposition spokesmen state that Hezb-i-Islami faction Commander Bashir has disarmed these Taliban and has been offered governorship of Baghlan province.

Meanwhile, a new foreign minister has been appointed in the Afghan Taliban government in place of Mullah Mohammad Ghous, who is being held by the opposition in northern Afghanistan, Taliban officials said Saturday.

Mullah Abdul Jalil, the new foreign minister, was previously deputy to Mr. Ghous, who was taken prisoner in the northern provincial capital of Mazar-i-Sharif late last month.

His elevation was decreed by the top leader of the Taliban Islamic Movement, Mullah Mohammad Omar, based in the southwestern Afghan city of Kandahar, a Taliban spokesman said.

Angolan peace at peril in Zaire domino effect

LUANDA (R) — Angola lurched towards crisis Friday with a government warning that new fighting involving the former rebel movement UNITA could wreck the fragile peace process and restart a civil war that went on for 20 years.

The flareup is directly linked to last month's defeat of the regime of Mobutu Sese Seko in neighbouring Zaire, a longtime ally of UNITA. Mr. Mobutu was toppled by Laurent Kabila, who has the staunch support of the Angolan government.

Military sources say the government and UNITA have thrown many troops into recent battles. The army was using tanks and artillery and the ex-rebels were firing mortar barges, in what was described as the worst fighting since a 1994 peace pact.

With its key ally Mobutu now in exile, UNITA said in a statement from its office in Rome that it was ready for immediate top-level talks to end the fighting.

UNITA said its leader Jonas Savimbi was prepared to meet President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos of Angola in Italy, where Mr. Dos Santos is currently on holiday. The offer was in response to an appeal from U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan for talks "with the precise aim of overcoming the current deep crisis."

In its first official statement since the fighting began three weeks ago, the Angolan government said UNITA was gathering soldiers and war material, threatening the peace accord.

UNITA's actions "could put in danger the Lusaka protocols, with all the grave consequences that would entail," it said.

"The United Nations must adopt measures to stop these belligerent intentions...The government has no intentions of returning to war...The government cannot ignore its own responsibilities to secure the frontier," it added.

The Angolan government denies it is taking advantage of UNITA's loss of a major ally who guarded the rebel movement's back door beyond the northern Angolan border with Zaire, and gave it logistics routes and a market for diamonds.

But analysts say it has seized the opportunity to roll back UNITA's grip on the northern diamond-rich areas which yield hundreds of millions of dollars annually, if not to deliver a military knockout blow to its old enemy.

Brazzaville wakes up to relative calm amid ceasefire hopes

BRAZZAVILLE (AFP) — Brazzaville woke to relative calm Saturday after brief exchanges of mortar fire and sporadic shooting overnight, but the military situation appears to have stabilised.

A brief burst of mortar fire was aimed at an air base occupied by troops loyal to President Pascal Lissouba late Friday, and the government soldiers traded fire with the militia of ex-President Denis Sassou Nguesso.

Early Saturday, another quick flurry of mortar fire rang out, "a kind of wake-up call," as one French military officer put it.

Apart from that, the capital was calm relatively nine days after fighting broke out. Several thousand people are believed to have died since then, and nearly 5,000 expatriates have been evacuated by French troops.

The military situation appeared unchanged from Friday following gains made by Mr. Sassou Nguesso's Cobras.

Brazzaville's international airport, where the French force is based, lies between the warring sides. Four French and two U.N. planes were due to evacuate more foreigners Saturday.

By late Friday, some 4,700 expatriates had been flown out of the city.

Fighting subsided Friday amid hopes that a ceasefire would take hold. The city's mayor, Bernard Kolelas, said a seven-point peace plan had been worked out between representatives of the two sides and was waiting for approval by the rival leaders.

The plan, which aims to disengage the two armed forces and end the division of the city, follows a ceasefire agreement Wednesday

which appeared at last to have come into effect.

Mr. Sassou Nguesso told AFP the warring sides might send negotiators to their "first exploratory meeting" in the Gabonese capital Libreville Saturday.

France has said its evacuation of civilians would be completed by 1600 GMT Sunday and the 1,250 French detachment would then start "its disengagement with a view to a total withdrawal."

Fighting broke out in Brazzaville on June 5 amid heightened tension ahead of presidential polls set for July 27 when Mr. Sassou Nguesso will stand against Mr. Lissouba.

It started when the army attacked Mr. Sassou Nguesso's home in a bid to force his private militia to disarm, and quickly degenerated into carnage.

Human rights groups slam U.N. mission on former Zaire probe

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Six human rights groups have chastised the United Nations for reports it was dropping a key investigator from probing alleged massacres in the Congo because of objections from President Laurent Kabila.

"If this information is correct, we wish to convey our deep distress at the terrible precedent it would set," said a statement from six organisations about the forthcoming probe in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly Zaire.

Diplomats and human rights groups have said that U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, supported by the United States, had agreed to Mr. Kabila's demand to drop Roberto Garreton of Chile so that the mission into alleged deaths of Rwandan refugees could go ahead.

"Mr. Garreton has been a strong and committed rapporteur (investigator) who, while displaying the highest professionalism and objectivity, has responded strongly to the abuses in the Zaire/Congo," the statement said.

"It sends a signal to every human rights representative of the United Nations that

those who engage in tough reporting, even when necessary and accurate, will not have the backing of the (U.N.) secretariat," it added.

The statement was signed by the directors of Human Rights Watch, the Jacob Blaustein Institute, the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Centre for Human Rights, the Physicians for Human Rights, the International League for Human Rights and the International Commission of Jurists.

But Ralph Zacklin, the acting U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, told reporters a decision had not been taken.

"I am not in a position and Mr. Kabila is not in a position to say Mr. Garreton should be removed from this mission," he said, adding that they had a mandate from the Geneva-based governmental commission on human rights.

Only the commission, he said, would be able to make such a change. Mr. Zacklin said he had requested a special meeting of the commission after an advance team goes to the Congo on June 20 and before the rest of the team goes there around July 7.

He said the mandate from the commission might have to be changed for various reasons once the initial probe had begun.

Mr. Kabila agreed to allow a mission when talking with Mr. Annan at a recent Organisation of African Unity summit in Harare, Zimbabwe. He then agreed to the dates during a visit from Bill Richardson, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Mr. Zacklin said Mr. Kabila, now that he headed a government and was no longer a rebel leader, realised that the allegations had some foundation.

"If they are going to take their place in the community of nations, they are going to have to deal with this problem," he said. "And it is a serious problem. That is the main reason they have agreed to the investigation."

Mr. Kabila's takeover last month of Africa's third largest country after a seven-month bush war has been tainted by reports that his troops have systematically killed Hutu refugees. Among them are militias implicated in the 1994 genocide against Rwandan Tutsis and Hutus.

5 killed in Malaysia helicopter crash

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Five people were killed Saturday when a private helicopter crashed near Kuala Lumpur, police said.

"There were three people in the ill-fated helicopter which crashed onto a busy road, killing two pedestrians," said an officer at the Kuala Lumpur Police Headquarters.

The victims were a pregnant woman and a child who were walking on the street in Sri Damansara

and three men in the helicopter, police said.

Their bodies were found inside the wreckage, police said.

They were reported to have died on the spot.

The crash occurred when the helicopter belonging to Malaysian communications giant Binariang SDN BHD was helping install a transmitter on top of the firm's 100-metre factory tower block, police said.

Binariang, owned by ty-

coon Ananda Krishnan owns and operates Malaysia's first satellite, MEASAT. It provides a host of communications services including cable television and digital mobile phone system.

Police said a sudden gush of strong wind caused the helicopter to go out of control and crash. The helicopter had earlier been in the air for about 30 minutes.

Investigations are on. Jly
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Urgent mission

IT IS no small measure of success that HRH Crown Prince Hassan Thursday, after meetings in Ankara with President Suleyman Demirel and Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, obtained a promise of an imminent Turkish withdrawal from northern Iraq. The recent incursion of the Turkish army deep into Iraq was a source of anxiety and concern in all the region's capitals. The depth of the Turkish penetration into Iraq and its duration have led to speculation that Ankara may have territorial designs on neighbouring Iraq in view of the power vacuum in the northern part of that country forced upon Baghdad by the West.

"The map of the region should not be changed," Prince Hassan declared at the conclusion of his working visit to Turkey. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq must be preserved, added the Crown Prince. Prince Hassan made clear at the same time that Jordan categorically rejected all acts of terrorism including those being committed by the PKK, the Kurdish separatist group. The Turkish leaders responded by asserting that Ankara has no intention of trespassing the sovereignty of Iraq and is not about to duplicate Israel's military pattern in South Lebanon.

The Kurdish peoples' quest for their civil, political and cultural rights can be pursued and realised through democratic and peaceful means whether in Iraq, Turkey or Iran. Turkey is one of the few countries in the Near East that enjoys a pluralistic democracy and advanced political institutions. Turkey should therefore afford its ethnic minorities ample opportunities to attain all their minority rights as accorded by international norms.

Prince Hassan's agenda during his visit to Turkey and the U.S. has an added sense of urgency. It is meant to make decision-makers acutely aware of the sufferings of the Iraqi people. The crippling sanctions applied against Baghdad for the last seven years have taken a dire toll on the majority of Iraqis for no fault of their own. The international community can no longer pursue an open-ended policy of punitive sanctions against Iraq simply because it cannot reach an accommodation with the Iraqi regime. The international support for continued sanctions against the Arab country has been waning considerably with Washington alone still pursuing the crusade for the punishment of Iraq. It is in this context and for this purpose that Prince Hassan's visit to the U.S. becomes all the more pressing.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE U.S. Congress's decision to consider Jerusalem as the united capital of Israel dealt a heavy blow to the Arab countries' diplomacy and is a shameful defeat for the moderate Arab leaders who still believe in the peace process and believe that the United States serves as its sponsor, according to a writer for Al Arab Al Yawm Saturday. The Arab leaders are to be blamed for this development because despite their knowledge of America's total bias towards Israel they are still attaching hope on Washington and continue to waste time and efforts on trying to beg the U.S. administration to do them justice, said Taher Adwan. The writer said that while Israel continues to build up its formidable military and economic power and acquiring from the United States all the means for guaranteeing supremacy in the region, the Arab leaders have been satisfied with the smiles and polite words they have been receiving from the successive American presidents, making them believe that the U.S. is still a partner in the peace making process. Where is the peace they have been talking about, asked the writer who pointed out that Israel, with U.S. backing, is still in control of the occupied Golan Heights, the Lebanese territory and all of Palestine. The writer advised the Arab leaders to give up their dependence on the United States and try to develop their own intrinsic power to regain their lawful rights and occupied lands.

A WRITER for Al Dustour urged the Water Authority of Jordan to exert more efforts in dealing with the water wastage in the Amman area so that the capital's residents can have sufficient water supply in the summer time. Hamadeh Farsaneh quoted officials at the WAJ as saying that a great quantity of water, nearly 50 per cent of the water pumped to the public, is lost due to two reasons: leaks from the worn out water network and tampering by the public with the water meters. It is enough to realise that the capital's residents need of water this year amounts to 93.5 million cubic meters and that only 88 mcm are available to prompt the concerned officials to take immediate action to speed up the work under way for the replacement of the old water network, the said writer. Quoting WAJ officials explaining about the lack of sufficient water-related equipment and efficient technicians to deal with the problem, the writer said that the government should take steps to address this serious situation.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

'Borrowing on commercial basis should only be done to reduce treasury debts to CBJ'

OFFICIALS AT the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) recently revealed that Jordan will again be in the market, before the end of 1997, for a loan, on commercial basis, of \$70 million in favour of the treasury. If this transaction is actually carried out, it will be the first external commercial loan to be contracted by the government of Jordan since the indebtedness crisis, which erupted in 1988.

An observer can see this move from either a positive or a negative point of view. As far as the positive side is concerned, the success of such a sovereign loan would mark a new era in which Jordan will have restored its credit-worthiness and reestablished itself as an acceptable borrower in good standing. This will confirm Jordan's outstanding success in reforming its national economy, removing distortions, covering imbalances and reducing external indebtedness as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) to less than 100 per cent.

On the negative side, it is obvious that external borrowing on commercial basis is not desirable. We had a bad experience in this respect in 1988. At one time our authorities found it easy to borrow externally in order to artificially raise the standard of living or to implement economic development by sinking in debt. We are supposed to have learnt a lesson, and never commit the same mistake — never again.

I am inclined to see the positive side, while keeping the negative side in the back of my minds, especially when the treasury is not in need of this commercial loan to cover a deficit in the budget, as was the case in the eighties. The purpose

of this loan is not to raise money but to make a point and to establish the completion of the rehabilitation process of the Jordanian economy as seen by the international market.

In order to confirm the positive side of this experiment and guard against the negative side, I suggest that the whole proceeds of the loan be paid to the Central Bank to reduce the old debt of the treasury, which is being carried forward year after year in CBJ's balance sheet, forming a weak point in CBJ's own financial position in general and the cover of the Jordan dinar in particular.

If the amount of \$70 million were to join the treasury pool of financial resources and become available to finance public expenditure on consumption or capital formation, the operation would turn out to be a set-back, accompanied by a soft fiscal policy and inflation. In such a case, this borrowing should be prevented by all means.

The Jordanian government, represented by the Ministry of Finance, is therefore required to declare its commitment to the effect that the amount of \$70 million, which will be borrowed from the Eurodollar market, will not be treated as other receipts of the treasury and will not be subjected to spending for any purpose except the reduction of the treasury debt owed to CBJ.

Without an explicit commitment of this kind, the idea of borrowing on commercial basis deserves to be fought vehemently. The government of the day will, in that case, be held responsible for involving the country once more in foreign indebtedness.

Aftermath of crisis in Papua New Guinea — 'constitutional order reigns'

By Gwynne Dyer

BACK IN March, it seemed that Papua New Guinea was about to descend into the special hell inhabited by countries like Sierra Leone: a mutinous army was trying to depose an elected prime minister in a country where the crisis is over, even though nobody knows yet how it came out.

Papua New Guinea's 4.3 million people begin voting on 14 June in an election that lasts two weeks. (85 per cent of the population live in villages, some so isolated that they had no contact with the rest of the world until the 1930s). But for most people, the "mercenary" crisis of last March is no longer even an issue.

Analogies with Sierra Leone and talk of mercenaries suggest that Papua New Guinea is in Africa, but of course it is not. It is a former Australian colony, about the size of France (Japan, Yemen, Kenya, Paraguay, California) that occupies the eastern half of the island of New Guinea. (Indonesia rules the rest).

You could say, however, that Papua New Guinea's problems are African, indeed super-African: 750 different languages, no national consciousness beyond what the schools have inculcated in the past couple of generations, and not enough money to go around. All of which explains the problem that led Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan to call in the mercenaries — and unless the crisis

On the outlying island of Bougainville, 800 kilometres north-east of the capital, Port Moresby, the world's biggest copper mine has been shut down for the past eight years by a local revolt arising from land-owners' claims that they received inadequate compensation. The revolt has grown into a full-blown separatist movement and the poorly armed, badly led PNG army proved completely incapable of reasserting central control.

So Prime Minister Chan turned to Australia for aid in upgrading his forces and was turned down flat. Canberra smelled a mini-Vietnam and wanted nothing to do with it. "I had no choice but to go to the private sector," said Sir Julius.

The private sector, in this case, was Sandline International, one of the sleek new firms of "security advisers," with brass plates in the Bahamas and glass-fronted offices in London

and New York, that have replaced the old, macho mercenary world of alcohol-blurred types like "Mad Mike" Hoare, "Black Jacques" Schramme, and Bob Denard. Sandline's representative for the PNG deal was Lt. Col Timothy Spicer (OBE), ex-Scots Guards and Falklands veteran.

Spicer first met Brigadier General Jerry Singirok, commander of the PNG Defence Force, and Defence Minister Mathias Ijape in a coffee shop in Cairns, Australia, in April 1996. But it was only after Singirok's offensive against the Bougainville rebels failed disastrously in September, and Australia and New Zealand refused to help, that Chan signed the Sandline contract last January.

Sandline was to provide weapons and military equipment and send 70 military specialists, mostly from Africa, to train counter-insurgency teams that would "harass the rebel patrols and deny them freedom of movement." Eighty per cent of the contract was for equipment, but the controversial element was the trainers — who might, under unspecified circumstances, even end up in combat.

When the deal became known in March, the Australian press, followed by the Western wire services, went nuts. Australian Prime Minister John Howard held four hours of talks in Sydney with Sir Julius trying to bully him out of the Sandline contract, and "dogs of war in the South Pacific" headlines were the order of the day.

If Howard was not aware by March that France was recruiting Serbian and other mercenaries to defend the dictator Mobutu in Zaire, then he should fire all of Australia's diplomats and start again. Oddly, however, he did not summon Prime Minister Chirac to Australia to hear the same lecture he gave to Prime Minister Chan.

Uncharitable critics might accuse Howard of patronising behaviour, a serious post-colonial attitude problem, or even racism, but let us not be uncharitable. What cannot be denied is that the international uproar gave army chief Jerry Singirok a pretext to move against the elected government of Papua New Guinea.

On March 17, General Singirok arrested all the Sandline employees in the country and went on national radio to demand Prime

Minister Chan's resignation, accusing him of corruption. As he spoke, his troops surrounded the parliament building. "I, as commander, am not going to play the game," he stated, as though he had not been involved in the Sandline deal from the start. Singirok's opportunism was driven by the fear (probably well grounded) that he was about to lose his job: The PNG Defence Forces have not performed well under his command. It was all quite picturesque, with soldiers in camouflage paint shooting into the air in the middle of Port Moresby. But countries like Papua New Guinea walk a tight-rope, and in March it nearly fell off.

The facade of order is what makes ordinary life tolerable and development possible, but it is a very thin skin in a country with more ethnic groups than all of Europe. Sir Julius Chan instantly dismissed Singirok and then stood aside himself until a two-month judicial inquiry absolved him of corruption charges. In the end, the constitutional order held, but it was a near-run thing.

So will Chan win this election? Who knows? There are 2,368 candidates running for only 109 seats, and over two-thirds of them have no party affiliation. In most of Papua New Guinea, the contest is between local "big men" who spend heavily to win the support of their own tribe — and then expect to be compensated for their costs by whichever coalition they ultimately join in Port Moresby.

"A party that wants to get a member probably will have to do so by reimbursing the member's expense," said Chan, sounding rather like an 18th-century English Whig. "I do not call that corruption. I simply say they are independent, they have spent that money."

Papua New Guinea will find out whether its next prime minister will be Sir Julius Chan — or Pias Wingit or Sir Michael Somare, who have both held that office twice in the revolving-door world of PNG politics — only when the new parliament meets and all the new members have been bought and paid for.

Which one it is scarcely matters. What does matter is that constitutional order reigns in the country. Papua New Guinea came close to the brink last March, but it managed not to fall over.

Defactonomics

By Dr. Tayseer Abdul Jabbar

Working for the peace dividends

BEING A supporter of the peace process, I was asked, just after the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, about the economic benefits of peace for Jordan.

My answer was based on hope and rationality, as well as the experience of other cases, particularly Western Europe, where peace prevailed after two devastating world wars.

Analytically, there are four main ways of benefiting from peace. First, with a more stable region, Jordanian, Arab and foreign investments will increase, hence enhancing growth of the Jordanian economy. Second, a similar trend could be expected in tourism, taking into account the new advantage of tourist packages that will include Jordan, Egypt, Palestine and Israel.

The third dividend would come from the reallocation of resources from military to development projects, be they schools, clinics, roads, etc. However, this was not the case with Egypt and Israel after reaching peace. Total military expenditures continued to increase in both countries, though the military budget decreased as a percentage of the total.

In the proportional sense, economically, there is gain and it may accelerate with

the progress of peace in the region. Forth, regional cooperation could bring about significant economic gains from projects that were before either under-utilised or not touched at all. There are many possibilities of mutually beneficial cooperation with the opening of economic relations between Jordan, Palestine and Israel. Some areas of cooperation could be: trade, water, labour exchange, joint projects, transportation, technology transfer.

I am tempted to add another form of peace dividend, namely, foreign financial assistance which could come in the form of debt relief, grants and soft loans. Based on the experience of the Egyptian-Israeli track, this was the main dividend of peace and continues to be so. So, why would it not be the case with Jordan, especially under the difficult conditions of the economic restructuring programme?

Had the peace dividend been felt in various shapes and forms, the need for assistance would not have been as acute as it is today. Trade, foreign investments, tourism and regional cooperation are moving at a frustrating pace. Therefore, there is need for foreign assistance while also weighing other possibilities.

Can women-only seats break men's political grip?

By Youssef Rafiq and Jan Sharma

KATHMANDU — Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka are all struggling with the issue of whether there should be a parliamentary quota of women-only seats.

The controversy has come to a head in Pakistan with the ruling party's rejection of an opposition bill seeking to restore reserved seats in the National Assembly.

The ruling Pakistan Muslim League promised during last February's election campaign to restore women's seats — phased out in 1993. During the debate on the opposition proposal, the government said it was not opposed to the reintroduction of special seats, but preferred to bring a comprehensive constitutional package rather than piecemeal legislation.

Women's activists were almost as annoyed by the tone of many of the speakers as by the rejection itself.

"If you give special seats to women, then tomorrow the members of the 'third sex' will also demand special seats to represent them," commented Ibrahim Paracha of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League.

His party colleague, Chaudhry Asad-ur-Rehman, argued that elected members represented both men and women in their respective constituencies, so there was no need for special seats for women.

"Children are also discriminated against and exploited in our society, so tomorrow you would demand separate seats for children in the House," he said to a round of applause.

Although a woman, Benazir Bhutto, leads the opposition Pakistan People's Party (PPP), there are only six women in the National Assembly and two in the Senate. There is only one woman member in the provincial assemblies.

The position reflects Pakistan's deep-seated gender inequality. There is no political will to raise the status of women. No government has been prepared to eliminate discriminatory laws instituted in the name of religion.

The situation is worst in Frontier Province, where a meeting of male clan representatives decided that women would not be allowed to register or vote in last February's general election. They agreed that any man who allowed women to breach the resolution would be fined up to 500,000 rupees and that his house would be torched.

Before the debate on the opposition proposal for women-only seats took place, about 100 women from 20 organisations demonstrated outside the

National Assembly. One of the handful of female members of the House, Fahmida Mirza of the PPP, told Gemini News Service that apart from the wide range of social and cultural factors that prevented women from participating in politics, the large sums of money and the mud-slinging involved in elections also acted as barriers.

"Women's seats must be restored by the government as women are discriminated against by this male-dominated society," she urged. She emphasised that she held this view because of the Muslim League, by virtue of its landslide election victory, would be able to nominate its own supporters to reserved seats.

The use of reserved seats to bolster the ruling party is also an issue in Bangladesh, where MPs vote to fill the 30 seats specifically allocated to women. The dominant party always ensures that most or all of the new representatives are party supporters — which becomes a more important criterion than political experience or ability.

This tends to discredit the idea of women MPs. Indirectly-elected women in a previous administration were nicknamed the "30-set ornaments."

To overcome this problem, women's organisations are pressing for direct elections to reserved seats. "Unless this is done, the 30 women MPs will remain ornamental," says Nasreen Haque of the Bangladesh organisation Nari Pakkha (Women's Forum).

A number of women's groups are also demanding a stipulation that political parties must field a set percentage of women candidates in elections.

Pakistani groups are making a similar demand — for 33 per cent of all election candidates to be women.

Nepali parties are supposed to ensure that at least five per cent of candidates are women, but in neither House do their numbers reach double figures. There have been some tough women MPs — Saitija Acharya was once called "the only man in the cabinet" because of the way she stood up to the prime minister. Many female MPs, however, have come to the job through family connections (as, of course, have many men).

Even Communist Party activist Vidya Bhandari — promoted as janata ko chhoti ("daughter of the people") — originally got a ticket to stand for election because she was the widow of the general secretary of the Communist Party of Nepal.

She believes women's representation will increase as women use democracy to become more assertive: "The more open society is, the more likely it is that traditions that inhibit women's participation will break down."

In India, controversy is blazing around a bill which seeks to reserve one-third of all seats in the Lok Sabha (lower house) and in all state legislatures.

The Indian debate was cited when Sri Lanka's independent Law and Society Trust recently discussed the issue of reserved seats for women in parliament. It was pointed out during the discussion that the United Nations had set 33 per cent representation as the participation threshold necessary for women to play a crucial role in decision-making at the national level.

Gemini News Service

LETTERS

Superfluous mobility

To the Editor:

THEY SAY that necessity is the mother of inventions. Well, I agree. People needed a phone which could be moved easily with them, so they invented the mobile phone. It can be very helpful if used in the right way and by the right people, like doctors or those whose jobs make it imperative to own and use such a phone.

Unfortunately, like many other useful inventions, the mobile phones have been misused by us, Jordanians. Most people here carry the mobile phone to show off. I have seen people of my age group, teenagers, carrying the phone to brag about its cost.

How ironic that we keep on talking about poverty in Jordan, starvation of the Iraqi children and suffering of Palestinians children and we have people who have "difficult" living without such material luxuries.

And by the way, have you ever got stuck in a traffic jam only to realise that it was caused by someone using a mobile phone while driving? It happened to me.

Many countries have banned drivers from using mobile phones while driving (after many accidents took place). I think it is high time to have laws in Jordan banning the use of mobile phones while driving. Better safe than sorry.

Jomana W. Karadshesh,
Amman.

Prince Hassan: A regional code of conduct is a key priority on our common agenda; for security to stabilise into peace and prosperity, we must build it from the ground up

Following is the text of a speech by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to the Turkish American Association entitled "Peace and stability in the Middle East: The role of Jordan and Turkey". The speech was delivered by the Crown Prince in Ankara on June 12, during the Prince's one-day visit to Turkey.

I AM greatly honoured to have been asked to address you tonight. Your invitation allows me to reflect upon Jordanian relations with both the United States and Turkey in the context of broad multilateral policy as well as in terms of long-standing social, economic and cultural ties. It also offers me the opportunity to make a few comments on the complex changes that are fast transforming our Euro-Asian region.

These over-arching relationships are extremely important in their impact on peace and stability in our area which has been variously termed as the Eastern Mediterranean, the West Asian region, the Middle Eastern region, the Levant and the Near East. All of these are similar definitions of one and the same region: the European rim of Asia and the Asian rim of Europe.

Turkey and Jordan share a cultural heritage that was forged several centuries ago at the apex of Islamic civilisation, a heritage that is characterised by deep continuities in religious expression, social customs and symbolic representations in art, music and literature. In the last three hundred years, this rich and elaborate Islamic tradition was fused with European ideas, so much so that a composite culture has grown up around our chief cities that takes for inspiration both Islam and Europe.

Any rationale for our present and future collaboration must begin with our shared cultural associations and the interaction of history. But these commonalities must also act as a springboard for a much larger regional strategy.

The world is moving towards the regionalisation of power, and we must move along with it. The geopolitical position of both our countries provides ample room for mutually beneficial cooperation. Jordan is at the crossroads of three major regions, Asia, Africa and the Gulf states. Turkey forms an essential link between Europe, the

Middle East, Central and South-West Asia.

Beyond historic, cultural and geopolitical considerations, Turkey and Jordan's security agendas overlap, and reinforce one another. For many years, Jordan has called for a comprehensive process to promote security and cooperation throughout the Middle East, broadly defined to include the Arab states, Israel, Turkey and Iran. Lately, the fruit of such an endeavour has become manifest with the Euro-Med and NATO security initiatives.

It may be argued that the "end of history" is with us in one important sense. The end of the cold war has brought about the end of international relations based on power politics of superpower confrontation. I feel that our region is faced with daunting, essentially human, but political, environmental and economic problems which must be addressed comprehensively to create a just and lasting peace. Presently, as we all know, the peace process is subjected to a severe crisis; essentially, a crisis of confidence.

Guided by principle and by a firm commitment to peace and security for our region, His Majesty King Hussein has exerted, over several decades, special efforts to bridge the gap between the different parties. In that sense I am pleased to say that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has always pursued a policy of attempting to solve rather than create problems — to solve them by peaceful means and to address the conflicts and disputes comprehensively. We have consistently supported all international legal organisations and instruments for the achievement of peace between all parties of the region, irrespective of religious differences or ethnic origins.

Peace is a strategic objective for Jordan. We concluded a peace treaty with Israel and this courageous decision has brought into effect new realities in the region in which Jordan's rights have been fully recognised. In practical terms, the peace treaty with Israel reasserts Jordan's role in the region.

On a broader level, the treaty has contributed to what I have termed terra media — the middle ground, the policies of centrism. I think it is worth noting that the lines drawn between Arabs and Israelis

are not necessarily nationalistic in the historical context, but today should be viewed more as lines drawn between moderates and extremists in both communities.

Jordan, as you well know, is deeply conscious of the strands of conflict in the region as they evolve, for we are at the centre of the Arab/Israeli conflict. We have felt the demographic shocks associated with conflict, more than possibly anyone else in the region.

In that context, I would like to remind you that Jordan has been the host to three large waves of involuntary migrations of refugees and displaced persons. In 1995, it was estimated that out of a total of 3.2 million Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA, 1.3 million reside in Jordan. That is to say the largest concentration outside former Palestine.

I was interested to note the other day that the United States received 2,500 refugees from the Rafiah camp on the Saudi-Iraqi border. Jordan alone, with its limited resources, absorbed over 300,000 refugees in the course of the 1990-91 Gulf crisis. Bedouins of Iraqi origin alone numbered in their thousands.

I emphasise the importance of refugees because in today's world the term is becoming less and less popular — less and less PC (politically correct). Yet for us these Palestinian refugees (1948, 1967 and 1990) have represented a challenge of human dignity. Since 1948, it has been our policy to provide them with passports and equal rights alongside all our Jordanian citizens. The refugee problem awaits a permanent political solution under international law and under the provisions of the pertinent United Nations resolutions. However, in the context of Jordanian civil society, these refugees (1948) have full Jordanian citizenship.

With regard to the peace process, Jordan believes that the refugee question represents what might best be described as a dimension of soft security, of flexible security. I am speaking here of anthropologists, not of the sale of weapons totalling \$300 billion over the past six years to our region, but simple human dignity.

The disparity of interest in soft security is best reflected, in my mind, by the fact that the MENA

Economic Summit in Casablanca in 1994 envisaged the development of infrastructure over a decade to the tune of \$35 billion. If \$300 billion can be spent on weapons, why can only \$35 billion be considered for infrastructure for a region extending from Morocco to Turkey inclusive?

After the peace was signed between Jordan and Israel, it became obvious that the essence of partnership was the promotion of peace as well as the institution of mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of future conflicts. The Euro-Med initiative, drawing its inspiration from the Barcelona conference in 1995, set out a comprehensive and practical strategy for the consolidation of peace and stability in the Mediterranean by focusing on economic progress, dialogue, mutual understanding and respect.

The comprehensive approach of Barcelona echoes that of the three baskets of Helsinki or the CSCE which has evolved now into the OSCE. Turkey and Jordan are but two of the twelve Mediterranean partners who have cooperated on a number of joint projects within the Euro-Med plan for action. These are the creation of a Euro-Med Charter for Peace and Stability, the promotion of a number of basic confidence and security building measures, the initialing of association agreements between the European Union and individual partner states, and the dialogue of cultures and civilisations.

In a related context and in a seminar held last year in Amman about "The Arab World and Turkey," I stated that "The first moderate outreach by countries in the Organisation of Islamic Conference has been manifested by the participation of peace-keepers from Malaysia, Pakistan, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt and Morocco, whether in the first peace-keeping activity or in the second peace-building activity of IFOR and NATO."

I have to make it perfectly clear that it is not enough for countries of Muslim credentials to say that our faith is centrist, to say that we have a moderate position on the issues, and to give the impression that our centrism reflects weakness. On the contrary, I think it is vitally important to be proactive in terms of our outreach. The horror of what has happened in the Balka-

ns today cannot, and should not, be repeated in terms of discrimination against Muslims in Europe."

In conjunction with European efforts to forge a communal Mediterranean ethos between North and South, Jordan has also made significant strides in its relations with NATO, itself equally concerned in developing regional guidelines on security issues. Jordan is already participating in a political and security dialogue with the organisation, and plans to send more Jordanians to attend NATO training courses. In the not too distant future, Jordan may quite possibly attain observer status in that organisation.

Both the Euro-Med and NATO initiatives are complementary proposals and have one thing in common: they recognise the indivisible character of security all over the Mediterranean region. The Barcelona process emphasises the all-inclusive nature of security. It recognises inter-cultural dialogue and contacts among human beings and peoples of the Mediterranean region as instruments to better mutual understanding, and therefore peace and progress.

Throughout all these initiatives, one thing remains clear: Jordan, along with Turkey and other like-minded regional states involved in the institutionalisation of comprehensive security guidelines for the area, believes that chances for peace are enhanced when states and peoples share a broader inter-dependent vision of the future, and the opportunity to work them out together.

Having said this, it is also important to lay stress on the fact that both the Euro-Med and NATO initiatives need to take into consideration the Middle Eastern region as a whole. Future security considerations must include more than a number of select countries with the will and vision to remake their regional agendas. The Mediterranean is interconnected culturally and geopolitically with the entire Middle East, including the Gulf. Partnership and dialogue within this broad region should be open to all.

Recently, we witnessed the conclusion of the historic Founding Act between NATO and Russia. Our vision for our region should be similarly inclusive and based on interdependence or an alliance of shared

interests and common agendas.

Partnership for Peace (PFP) in the Euro-Atlantic context is being paralleled by PFM (or Partnership for the Mediterranean). In this way, while moving forward to realise our vision of security and cooperation, the territorial integrity of all states in our region can be guaranteed. The current state system is far better than the alternative of Balkanisation or changing the regional map through the use of force. A regional code of conduct is a key priority on our common agenda. We must make sure that the "constructive ambiguity" to which Henry Kissinger used to refer is not replaced by "destructive clarity" in our search for a better future for all the people of our region, or in our search for peace and stability.

A new phenomenon has been observed in the aftermath of the cold war. Private resource flows have become the backbone of investment in developing economies. They must be mobilised to fuel growth in our region. During the nineties, as is widely known, private flows to developing countries overtook official flows by far. Private flows increased from \$44 billion in 1990 to an estimated \$227 billion in 1996. By contrast, official flows declined from \$56 billion in 1990 to \$39 billion in 1996.

"What we need is a plan of action that is at once irresistible and practical, a broadly defined security approach that incorporates regional realities within its theoretical reach so as to combine both the utilitarian as well as the visionary aspects of peace. Such an all-encompassing concept, we submit, will only come about through dialogue, mediation and realistic assessments."

Analysts may quickly point out that the Mediterranean region has not yet benefited in any meaningful way from these new trends, the share of the MENA region being a mere \$7 billion out of \$227 billion of private investment in 1996. But our region continues to show one of the most rapid rates of growth in the flow of external private invest-

ments. It is also described as having "a huge potential" in terms of socio-economic development. We must attract both governmental capital as well as private investment to make any reasonable headway in our national priorities.

For security to stabilise into peace and prosperity, we must build it from the ground up. In this respect, Jordan and Turkey share a commonality of socio-economic interests that can underpin future cooperation. These interests revolve around transportation schemes, investment in the Jordan Rift Valley, water sharing and energy resources. In reality, the region of Jordan and Turkey is a Natural Economic Territory (NET) with many potential growth triangles in which our private sectors can play a leading role. Regional energy networks, which were discussed in the MENA economic summit in Casablanca and Amman, still await implementation. In the meantime, plans to supply Russian gas to Israel have been discussed.

In terms of NETs, a system of transportation tying Turkey's western region to Aqaba in the south of Jordan would inject a tremendous boost in the development of a sub-regional market in goods and products. This would lessen reliance on costly imports of food, textiles and machinery and be a boon for local indus-

Turkey but scarce among Turkey's southern neighbours, can be supplied to regional partners in return for Gulf oil and gas. Finally, Jordan's warm ties with most of its neighbours makes it an indispensable ally in mediating potential or actual crises in water or resource management. Jordan can intercede to help interested regional parties heal long-standing rifts and thus increase open access to the area's economic potential for the benefit of all.

Of course, building bridges also entails the often painful blasting away of encrusted residue and accumulated remains. One of the hardest things to do is to distance oneself from decades of distrust and suspicion.

The time has come to look beyond sanctions and the "dual containment" of Iraq and Iran to a future where both countries are reintegrated into the region with their massive socio-economic and human potential.

To our thinking, a regional concept such as the one I have just outlined must be at once cooperative and open, embracing a diverse range of issues and countries while continuing to maintain its stated purpose as an all-inclusive cooperative platform. It must be a meeting place for the convergence of unities as well as the solution for differences. Jordan believes that the effort to build bridges between the states of the region and from that region to the world is a commendable and worthy role for any country to undertake.

But it is not enough. A peaceful, cooperative, development-oriented vision of the region's future is important in itself but our area is painfully in need of something far more concrete.

What we need is a plan of action that is at once irresistible and practical, a broadly defined security approach that incorporates regional realities within its theoretical reach so as to combine both the utilitarian as well as the visionary aspects of peace. Such an all-encompassing concept, we submit, will only come about through dialogue, mediation and realistic assessments. In the words of the Mediterranean Charter, "Mediterranean peace and security are understood as a final good, on the international interstate and human levels."

Oklahoma City bomber

(Continued from page 12)

brate somebody else's death," said Catherine Alaniz, whose father Claude Medaris was killed in the blast. "But my dad didn't have a choice to live or die and I don't think McVeigh should either. He got the verdict that he deserved."

While some survivors and family members wanted Mr. McVeigh sentenced to life in prison without parole, the vast majority had called for the death penalty.

Mr. McVeigh's death sentence drew a relieved, but muted reaction across the United States.

President Bill Clinton thanked the jury for its efforts. "This investigation and trial have confirmed our country's

faith in its justice system," Mr. Clinton said.

In a country where prisoners on death row sometimes languish for a decade or more, Mr. McVeigh may be put to death relatively quickly, legal experts said.

They said Mr. McVeigh's death by lethal injection could come within a few years, depending on the length of the appeals process that automatically kicks in.

Mr. McVeigh joins 13 other prisoners who have been sentenced to die for federal crimes, mostly drug-related offences. Throughout the country there are about 3,200 prisoners on death row who have been sentenced to die for state crimes.

Local elections may be held up...

(Continued from page 1)

so-called "area B", which lies under Palestinian civilian control and Israeli security control.

The Palestinians rejected the withdrawal as too small, saying Israel must hand

over at least 90 per cent of the West Bank in the course of the three redeployments.

Israel, which suspended the first withdrawal, has said only it can determine from what areas to re-deploy.

Israeli troops wound 30 Palestinians...

(Continued from page 1)

of Hebron to Palestinian rule in January under an interim peace deal but kept troops to protect the settler enclaves in the town.

Earlier on Saturday, Palestinian gunmen shot and wounded an Israeli woman motorist on the outskirts of Har Adar Jewish settlement in the West Bank north of Jerusalem, Israeli security sources said.

The army said that at least one gunman hit a woman driving a car at Har Adar near the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway. The victim, who was not named, was in moderate condition, it added.

The army set up roadblocks and searched surrounding Palestinian villages for the attackers. It later said troops arrested six residents of Biddu village and that a curfew had been imposed on the village of Qatannah.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has cancelled an upcoming trip to the United States in order to deal with controversial domestic legislation, his spokesman said Saturday.

"Yes, that's true... he was to have left on June 21,"

spokesman Ofir Akunis told Reuters when asked if the trip had been cancelled due to the pending legislation on who may perform conversions to Judaism. He said Mr. Netanyahu was to have gone to New York to attend U.N. functions.

Mr. Akunis refused to comment on Israeli media reports the cancellation was due to the deadlock in Middle East peace moves. A second Netanyahu aide, Shai Bazak, later denied those reports, saying: "That's not correct."

Israel's Army Radio said Mr. Netanyahu had cancelled the trip because he had hoped to fit in a meeting with President Bill Clinton but now wanted to avoid talks with Mr. Clinton due to the faltering peace process.

"That (domestic legislation) is the official excuse... the problem is that the diplomatic process is deadlocked and strongly deadlocked," the radio's diplomatic reporter Udi Segal said.

"He (Mr. Netanyahu) thought he would arrive... after a summit, after some sort of meeting with Mr. Arafat," Mr. Segal said.

Either Netanyahu or peace - Erekat

(Continued from page 1)

Israel calls a halt to settlement building in east Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Mr. Netanyahu, whose right-wing coalition depends on hardline supporters of settlement expansion, has publicly refused any halt.

While Mr. Erekat delivered his speech at the swearing in of a new mayor in Bethlehem, hundreds of Palestinians clashed with Israeli soldiers in Hebron in the worst unrest in the West Bank in more than a month.

Palestinian International Cooperation Minister Nabil Shaath accused Israel of blocking diplomatic efforts to solve the crisis and launching a "military-style campaign" of settlement activity.

"We are facing a settlement campaign resembling an organised military campaign by Israel against all the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and Gaza strip," Mr. Shaath told journalists in Gaza city.

He said an Egyptian

mediation attempt over the past week had "run into a wall set up by Israel to prevent any sort of progress."

Egyptian envoy Osama Al-Baz met Thursday with Mr. Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat separately, but failed to bring the two sides any closer to resuming negotiations.

Mr. Erekat said Mr. Netanyahu had offered in his talks with Mr. Baz to pause construction work on a new Jewish settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim, a hill in east Jerusalem, for four and a half days.

The Israeli leader also offered to build 3,000 new homes for Arabs in Sur Baher, an Arab village near Jebel Abu Ghneim, in a neighbourhood which would be known as "Abu Ghneim-B". Mr. Erekat said.

"We refuse these proposals totally, in form and spirit," said Mr. Erekat.

It was the launch of construction on March 18 at Jebel Abu Ghneim, which sparked the current crisis in the peace process.

Pro-government, centrist parties...

(Continued from page 1)

urday termed Friday's ballot "an essential step on the way to strengthening local democracy for the economic and social development of all the kingdom's regions."

More than 70 per cent of the electorate of around 13 million had turned out to vote, according to preliminary figures.

Results had been expected earlier with polling booths closing at 6 p.m. Friday. But senior officials in hundreds of stations used their prerogative under the law to stay open for a further two hours to give

more voters chance to cast ballots.

Under planned decentralisation, regional councils will also have more money and power to push development projects to end the disparity between town and country.

About half of the population of 28 million live in the countryside and have higher illiteracy rates, poorer health and lower living standards than people in the cities.

Pro-government and centrist parties won about two-thirds of the seats in a 1992 ballot.

Hizbollah detains UNIFIL...

(Continued from page 1)

UNIFIL sources said the Irish man was a sergeant, one Italian was a warrant officer and the other a lieutenant pilot.

"Like hundreds of other UNIFIL personnel they were in Beirut for the weekend. The Irish sergeant thought the area was very colourful and wanted to do a stand-up piece for a video message he was taping for his mother," a UNIFIL source said.

"UNIFIL, which has allowed its personnel and their families to move freely anywhere in

Lebanon since 1994, views this incident seriously. Lebanese authorities have been informed," the statement added.

The source quoted one of the detained men as telling him: "the Hizbollah men were polite and outright friendly at the end. They even extended an invitation for a return visit."

UNIFIL imposes tight regulations about photography. "But how are we to know that there's a sensitive building here... there? You see a colourful so you want to take a souvenir photo," the source said. ally oral

Cash to replace coupons for rice, sugar and milk from September

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government has decided to stop issuing food coupons to Jordanian citizens and to replace them with cash subsidies.

Making the announcement Saturday at a press conference, Supply Secretary General Mohammad Smadi said the new arrangement will start as of the beginning of September, adding that the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply will undertake the task of paying the cash subsidies unlike the subsidy on bread which was handled by the Ministry of Finance.

The government introduced the food coupons in 1991 to ensure that Jordanian citizens only receive subsidies for sugar, powdered milk and rice and to enable the beneficiaries buy the basic foodstuffs at prices lower than the prevailing market rates.

Noting that the ministry is currently putting the finishing touches to a mechanism for the distribution of the cash subsidies, Dr. Smadi said that various ministries, government departments, companies and banks have been requested to provide the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply with lists of names of their employees who possess food coupons covering October, November and December so that they can be returned to the ministry which, in return, will reimburse the cash subsidies to them.

As to retired employees, they can receive the cash subsidies from the Social Security Corporation or the Ministry of Finance while the rest of the citizens can hand the coupons they have to the ministry's centres around the country.

Noting that the ministry's lists have shown that 3.8 million citizens have been receiving the sugar, rice and powdered milk subsidies, Dr. Smadi said that each citizen will be entitled to 720 fils a month in cash subsidy.

Todate the government has been issuing food coupons for heads of families whose gross incomes do not exceed JD500 a month.

According to Dr. Smadi, the new measures were taken to facilitate the distribution of subsidies to Jordanian citizens. He pointed out that the ministry will stop importing these three food commodities as the private sector has taken over such a task.

Kuwait eager to cut foreigners in workforce

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait, whose citizens form about a third of its population, plans to reduce dependence on foreigners and encourage the private sector to hire more Kuwaitis, a minister was quoted as saying.

Planning Minister Ali Al Zmei said in a written response to parliament that Kuwait's population was 1.96 million at the end of 1996, including 1.25 million foreigners who reside in the oil-rich Arab Gulf state. Al Watan newspaper reported.

Kuwait planned to replace foreigners in the public sector by Kuwaitis at an annual rate of 10 per cent and "increase the ability of the private sector to absorb" Kuwaitis, he said.

Sheikh Zmei put the foreign workforce at 876,586, including 555,420 Asians, 293,651 nationals of other Arab countries, 5,688 Europeans and 3,330 Americans.

The state employs more than 90 per cent of Kuwaitis in the workforce.

The government planned to make it less attractive for the private sector to hire foreigners by obliging it to provide them with health care and raising residency and entry fees, the minister said.

Kuwait might also "subsidise" the salaries of Kuwaitis in the private sector and link facilities granted to a private business with the number of Kuwaitis it employs, Sheikh Zmei said.

World labour body sees fightback

GENEVA (R) — The head of the world's largest labour grouping said Friday that although workers' rights were under fierce assault around the globe with the advance of free markets and open trade a fightback was firmly under way.

Bill Jordan, general secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), also told a news conference worker bodies would have to resume the fight for rules on labour standards in the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Mr. Jordan was presenting the ICFTU's annual report on violations of labour rights, which said employers in rich and poor countries were exploiting economic globalisation to push up profits by attacking work standards.

"The globalisation of trade and the intensifying competition that this is producing is adding a new dimension to the attack on (labour) standards and on trade unionism in general," the former British union chief declared.

"We're seeing governments, because of the fear of missing out on the benefits of world trade and ... foreign investment, being prepared to do the bidding of big business," he said.

But recent elections in Britain and France — where centre-left parties won power — showed that a backlash was starting "against a process of globalisation which has no social dimension." Voters had shown they were tired of job insecurity.

The report from the Brussels-based ICFTU pointed to China, Colombia, Nigeria and Indonesia as among the worst violators of labour rights, but it also asserted that abuse was frequent in the United States.

The survey, issued in Geneva during the conference of the United Nations International Labour Organisation (ILO), said women in particular were suffering from an assault on unions by governments and big companies.

"This combination of governments seeking to shed their powers of intervention in the economy, and employers and the business world seeking to increase theirs, is one of the root causes of anti-union repression," it added.

Mr. Jordan said developing countries who have

rejected a bid by ILO Chief Michel Hansenne to give the U.N. body teeth to enforce core labour standards had shown the "hypocrisy" of their stance against keeping the issue out of the WTO and in the ILO.

He said their stance reinforced the argument that only by using the WTO to enforce these standards by linking them to trade sanctions could be effective. "Standards without means of enforcing them are just laughed at," he said.

The ICFTU structures were identical to those in a similar report issued by the smaller, but also Brussels-based World Confederation of Labour (WCL).

Under globalisation — trade liberalisation, free investment flows and integration of world financial markets — the market was the only regulator and "everything is sacrificed to the cause of competitiveness" to maximise profits, the WCL said.

The report by the ICFTU, which links 124 million workers in 195 organisations across 137 countries, said Latin America was the main scene of violence against union activists — 264 of whom had been murdered around the world last year.

"The key statistical tool for assessing the state of industrial relations in Latin America is still the body count," the report declared. In Colombia, 98 worker leaders had been killed and 24 in Brazil.

China, it said, "has one of the worst records of trade union repression," keeping its workers "on a tight rein, harassing and persecuting independent trade unionists with the blessing of the (official) All-China Federation of Trade Unions."

Elsewhere in Asia, it said, many governments still viewed trade unions "as an alien institution bent on frustrating economic progress." Burma, Vietnam and North Korea simply placed officials in control of "fake unions."

In Indonesia, an independent union federation was under constant harassment, and employers often used their links with police and military to break up strikes.

In the United States, the report declared, "the right to strike and the right of workers to organise trade unions are not adequately protected in the labour legislation."

REUTERS

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The Business of Information

| Major Currencies & Cross Rates | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|--------|
| Currency | USD | DEM | GBP | CHF | JPY | ITL | FRF | 11/06/97 | 17:13 |
| US Dollar | 1.7160 | 0.6116 | 1.4375 | 111.16 | 1.3868 | 1689.70 | 1.9295 | 5.8005 | |
| DE Mark | 0.5828 | 1.0000 | 0.3561 | 0.3370 | 64.79 | 0.8078 | 984.58 | 1.1244 | 3.3807 |
| GB Sterling | 1.6350 | 2.8070 | 1.0000 | 2.3501 | 161.68 | 2.2674 | 2764.01 | 1.1559 | 9.4885 |
| CH Franc | 0.6857 | 119.33 | 0.4250 | 1.0000 | 77.51 | 0.9644 | 1175.85 | 134.30 | 4.0360 |
| JP Yen | 0.0090 | 1.5421 | 0.5496 | 1.2922 | 1.0000 | 1.2470 | 15.21 | 173.59 | 5.2192 |
| CA Dollar | 0.7211 | 0.7140 | 0.3611 | 0.0849 | 1523.53 | 0.8195 | 11.41 | 3.4295 | |
| IT Lira | 0.0006 | 1.0140 | 0.3611 | 0.0849 | 1523.53 | 0.8195 | 11.41 | 3.4295 | |
| NL Guilder | 0.5183 | 88.91 | 0.3168 | 74.46 | 87.53 | 0.7183 | 875.79 | 33.250 | |
| FR Franc | 0.1724 | 0.2896 | 0.1053 | 24.7464 | 18.14 | 0.2368 | 33.25 | 33.2500 | |

| Middle Eastern Currencies | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|--------|
| Currency | USD | JOD | SAR | BAB | DAR | KUN | AED | 11/06/97 | 17:13 |
| US Dollar | 1.0000 | 0.7080 | 3.7503 | 0.3770 | 3.6398 | 0.3021 | 3.6726 | 1.5360 | 3.3895 |
| Jordan Dinar | 1.4124 | 1.0000 | 5.2970 | 0.5325 | 5.1410 | 0.4266 | 5.1873 | 2168.48 | 4.7874 |
| GB Sterling | 0.2666 | 0.1858 | 1.0000 | 0.1005 | 0.97 | 0.0805 | 0.88 | 408.57 | 0.9038 |
| Bahrain Dinar | 2.65 | 1.8781 | 9.9483 | 1.0304 | 9.66 | 0.8012 | 9.74 | 4074.49 | 8.9911 |
| Qatar Dinar | 0.2747 | 0.1948 | 1.0304 | 1.0304 | 1.0000 | 0.8012 | 1.01 | 422.00 | 0.9312 |
| Kuwait Dinar | 3.3107 | 2.3440 | 12.4182 | 1.2481 | 12.05 | 1.0000 | 12.16 | 5088.25 | 0.9312 |
| Emirates Dinar | 0.2723 | 0.1928 | 1.0212 | 1.0212 | 0.9911 | 0.8022 | 1.01 | 418.23 | 0.9229 |
| Lebanese/1000 | 0.65 | 0.4609 | 2.4415 | 0.2454 | 2.3897 | 0.1986 | 2.3910 | 11.41 | 2.2087 |
| Egyptian | 0.2950 | 0.2089 | 1.1065 | 0.1112 | 1.0738 | 0.0891 | 1.0835 | 453.17 | |

| Energy | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Oil | Last | Prev | Change | Unit | Oil | Last | Prev | Change | Unit |
| Brent | 17.36 | 17.35 | 0.01 | \$/bbl | SA Riyal | 0.2668 | 0.4577 | 0.1909 | 0.38344 |
| WTI | 16.90 | 16.80 | 0.10 | \$/bbl | AE Dirham | 0.2723 | 0.46744 | 0.19514 | 30.281 |
| Bonny | 17.35 | 17.35 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | KW Dinar | 3.3107 | 5.88505 | 2.0247 | 4.7819 |
| Dubai | 16.95 | 16.88 | 0.07 | \$/bbl | BH Dinar | 0.3770 | 4.55373 | 1.62232 | 3.81388 |
| UL Gas | 190.00 | 190.00 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | CY Pound | 1.9492 | 3.3442 | 1.1911 | 2.8001 |

| Metal Prices | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-----------|------|------|--------|-------|
| Commodity | Last | Prev | Change | Unit | Commodity | Last | Prev | Change | Unit |
| Gold (ozs) | 343.7 | 344.2 | -0.5 | \$/oz | USD | 5.59 | 5.70 | -0.11 | \$/oz |
| Silver (ozs) | 4.78 | 4.8 | -0.02 | \$/oz | GBP | 6.48 | 6.50 | -0.02 | \$/oz |
| Platinum (ozs) | 457 | 462 | -5 | \$/oz | JPY | 0.53 | 0.56 | -0.03 | \$/oz |
| AL (3 Months) | 1628 | 1629 | -1 | \$/oz | DEM | 2.87 | 3.02 | -0.15 | \$/oz |
| CU (3 Months) | 2555 | 2560 | -5 | \$/oz | FRF | 3.23 | 3.34 | -0.11 | \$/oz |
| Zinc (3 Months) | 1371 | 1373 | -2 | \$/oz | CHF | 0.87 | 1.00 | -0.13 | \$/oz |
| Lead (3 Months) | 640 | 642 | -2 | \$/oz | ITL | 6.58 | 6.79 | -0.21 | \$/oz |
| Ni (3 Months) | 7320 | 7340 | -20 | \$/oz | | | | | |

| Main Equity Indices | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|--------|-------|---------|---------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Index | Value | Change | % Chng | High | Low | Pr Cls | Index | Value | Change |
| New York | DOW JONES | 7578.47 | 38.2 | 0.52 | 7578.31 | 7534.43 | New York | S&P 500 | 868.99 |
| New York | FT-SE 100 | 4736.9 | -4.7 | -0.06 | 4759.3 | 4722.4 | New York | NIKKEI 225 | 20289.33 |
| London | CAC 40 | 2894.55 | 30.37 | 1.14 | 2708.48 | 2873.6 | London | DAX | 3677.43 |
| Tokyo | | | | | | | Frankfurt | | |

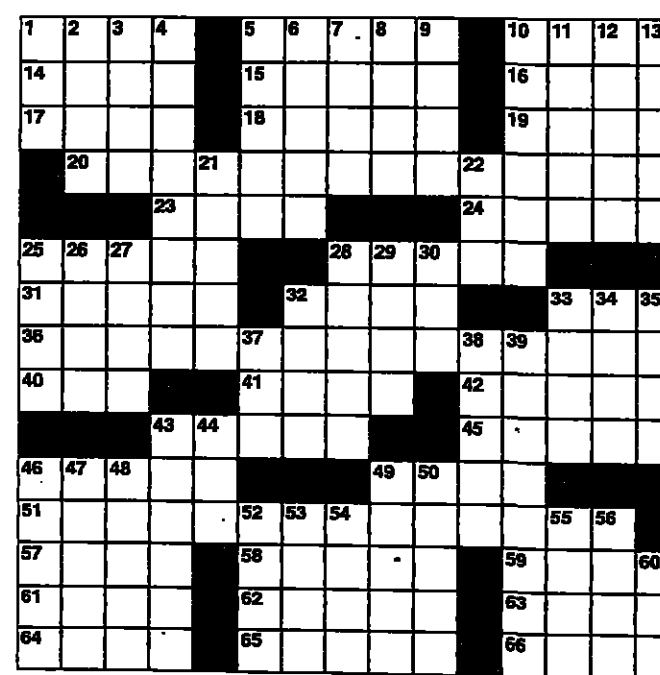
| Energy | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| Commodity | Last | Prev | Change | Unit | Commodity | Last | Prev | Change | Unit |
| Coffee (c/bbs) | 216 | 216 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | US Dollar | 0.708 | 0.710 | -0.002 | \$/bbl |
| Cocoa (\$/ton) | 1455 | 1455 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | GB Sterling | 1.1587 | 1.1645 | -0.0058 | \$/bbl |
| Sugar (\$/ton) | 328 | 328 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | DE Mark | 0.4127 | 0.4148 | -0.0021 | \$/bbl |
| Wheat (\$/ton) | 150.5 | 150.5 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | CH Franc | 0.4923 | 0.4948 | -0.0025 | \$/bbl |
| Soya (c/bbs) | 22.7 | 22.7 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | FR Franc | 0.1221 | 0.1227 | -0.0006 | \$/bbl |
| Tea (stg/kg) | 150 | 150 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | JP Yen | 0.635 | 0.6382 | -0.0032 | \$/bbl |
| Barley (\$/bsh) | 0 | 0 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | NL Guilder | 0.3871 | 0.3889 | -0.0018 | \$/bbl |
| Rice (\$/ton) | 480 | 480 | 0.00 | \$/bbl | IT Lira | 0.4182 | 0.4203 | -0.0021 | \$/bbl |

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan

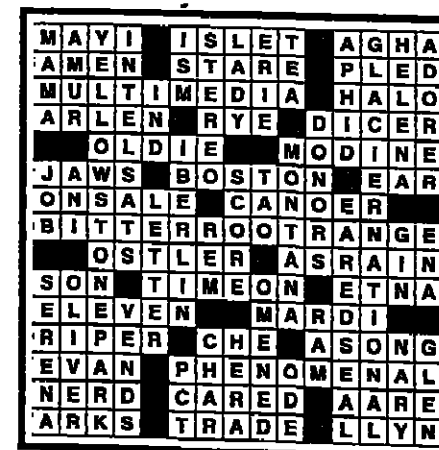
THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- Wield a poniard
 - Scoops
 - Sailors
 - British nobleman
 - WWII vessel
 - Very small brook
 - Muse of history
 - Overpowering terror
 - Inter —
 - In an overly careful manner
 - Masculine
 - Poem
 - Fierce one
 - Edible fungus
 - Worship
 - Raced wildly
 - Flow outwardly
 - "Just missed it"
 - Derek's number
 - Busy as —
 - Gay
 - Panama, for one
 - Plus
 - Philippine island
 - Bride of Lohengrin
 - Good buddies
 - Decisive defeat
 - Feudal lord
 - Ancient beauty of Pompeii
 - Many words
 - Synthetic fabric
 - Ruler
 - Look
 - Animal hides
 - Safecracker

- DOWN
- Champagne word
 - Powder, briefly
 - Seed covering
 - Garb of old
 - Drive off
 - Diminish
 - Taboo
 - Manner of walking
 - Draw with acid
 - Driveway cover
 - Houston athlete
 - Serene happiness
 - List of candidates
 - Ranee's garment
 - Eden's first lady
 - Diplomacy
 - Loafing
 - Hoodlum
 - Inn
 - French river
 - Car of old
 - Brass instrument
 - Salves
 - Cotton unit
 - Spilled youngster
 - Forbidden
 - Discontinue
 - Madness
 - Oil
 - Metric measure
 - Kind of money
 - Unaccompanied
 - Timid one
 - Grain disease
 - Claims against property
 - Spilled liquid
 - Fatigue
 - Took a nosedive
 - Recommended amount
 - Hang-up
 - Unit of work



by Frank R. Jackson

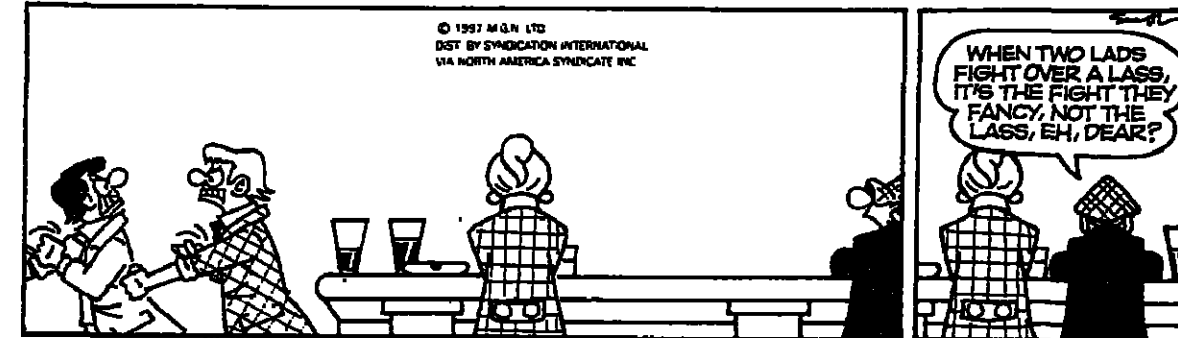


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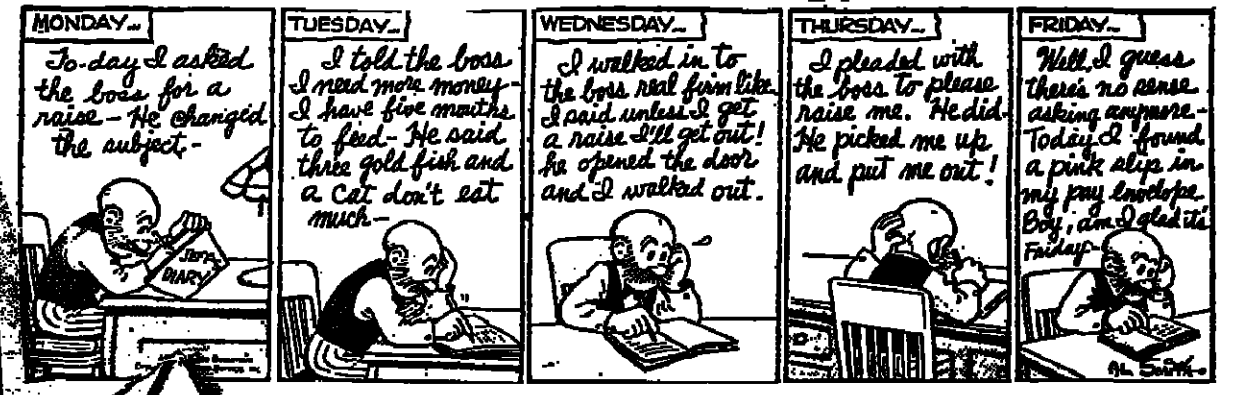
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 15, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Let your good friends know exactly what it is you are trying to achieve today, and they will be happy to help you. Show your appreciation to them by doing something special which they will truly appreciate in the days ahead.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can accomplish a great deal today, however, don't go around blowing your own about it or others will think that you are bragging. Finish up a troubling credit matter which has been put aside for sometime.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) If you feel you are under too much pressure today, find a way to relax before you lose your temper and say something which you could regret in the days ahead. Be sure to drive with great care while out on the highway.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You should not try to renege on a promise you have today, or you'll find yourself in hot water, be calm and reasonable with your mate and carefully listen to what is said before you put your foot in your mouth.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A business affair has you confused today, it really isn't worth all the difficulty it is causing. A fellow associate can help you finish this up quickly and become quite successful with your efforts.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you want to improve the efficiency in your place of business today, study your plans for flaws first. Patience and logic are your key words at this time so that you can deal with any obstacles whether they be large or small.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) If you run away from your responsibilities to have a good time today, you will be disappointed. Be sure you stay within your budget or you could find yourself short of funds when the time truly necessary.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A family friend has a difficult dilemma which you can help to solve today, however, don't fool yourself into believing that this can be done overnight. Later this evening you can meet with close friends for some fun.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You should not be overly critical today of a friend who is in an argumentative mood, at this person has difficulties. Be sure to drive very carefully while on the highway so that you avoid any difficulties.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You will be tempted to overspend for something you desire today, however, that would not be wise at this time. Set up a better budget, and stick to it so that you will have extra funds for an emergency.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You have some excellent new ideas today, however, this is not the time to put them in motion or you could discover that you won't be successful. Stay around friends who are calm and poised this evening.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Although you feel restricted today and you want to get away from the daily grind, stay put and rethink your position before you get in a difficult situation. Later this evening will be good for relaxing at home with loved ones.

Birthstone of June: Pearl — Moon Stone

A review of news from the Arabic press

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Jordan leads Bulls to 5th championship in seven years

CHICAGO (R) — Michael Jordan scored 39 points and the Chicago Bulls worked their fourth-quarter magic again to beat the Utah Jazz 90-86 and win their fifth NBA championship in seven years on Friday.

"I thought positive and did whatever I could do. Every little inch of energy that I have, I'm going to provide for this team," said Jordan. Backup guard Steve Kerr's jump shot with five seconds to go — on a pass from Jordan — put the defending champions up for the last time in a game Utah led from late in the first quarter until just under nine minutes were left in the fourth.

"What a thrill," said Kerr. "Who could ever have expected this, to hit the game-winning shot in the NBA finals? This is a joke. I can't believe I'm sitting up here."

After Kerr's basket, Scottie Pippen stole Bryon Russell's long, crosscourt inbound pass and knocked the ball to Toni Kukoc, who broke away for a dunk for the final score, bringing red streamers and multi-colored confetti down on the court as the Bulls hugged one another in celebration.

A jubilant Jordan held up five fingers to indicate his fifth championship, then his wide grin broadened as he added a sixth, seventh and eighth finger to a "who knows" gesture.

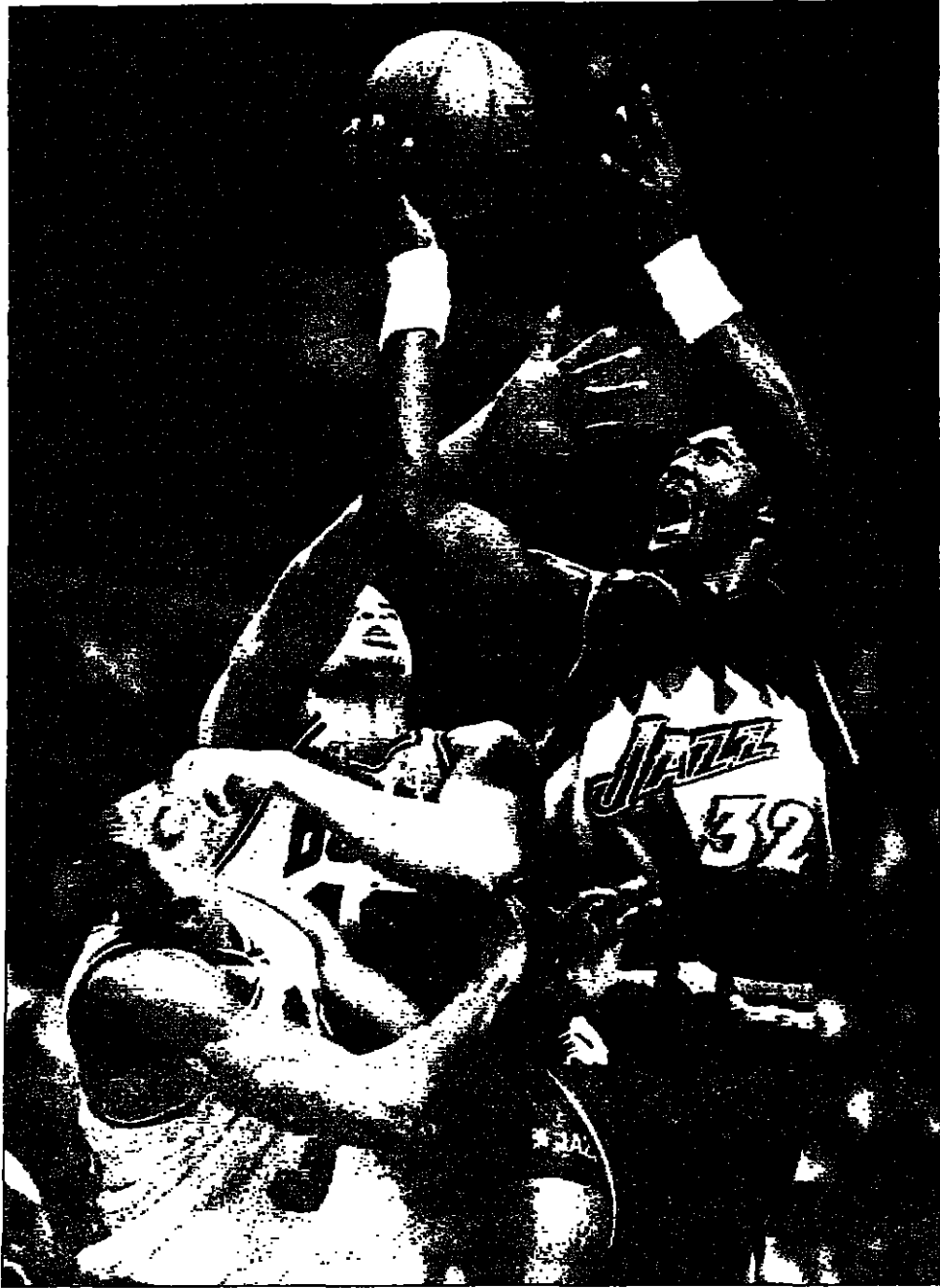
Jordan — who had 11 rebounds, four assists, a steal and a blocked shot — was named Most Valuable Player of the finals, which the Bulls won four games to two. He became the playoffs' top scorer for the ninth time, averaging 31.1 points per game.

"He's still a dominant force in this game, and still the most valuable player we've seen in the game," said Bulls coach Phil Jackson.

The MVP award made him a perfect 5-for-5 in the Bulls' finals, which they won the last five years he did not spend time away to dabble in baseball. No other player has won more than three NBA finals MVP awards.

The Chicago fans chanted "MVP, MVP" — a chant that had a special edge after Utah star Karl Malone had narrowly edged Jordan in voting for the regular season MVP award.

But Jordan said he would



Utah Jazz forward Karl Malone (R) drives over the top of Chicago Bulls forward Scottie Pippen (L) as he drives to the hoop during the first period in game six of the NBA Finals in Chicago. Bulls center Brian Williams is at rear (Reuters photo)

like to share the award with Scottie Pippen, the only other Bull to be here for all five titles. Pippen had 23 points, nine rebounds, two assists, two steals and three blocks.

"Scottie's defence was a one-man wrecking crew," said Jackson.

Dennis Rodman had 11 rebounds and backup centre Brian Williams added seven rebounds, two assists and four points for Chicago.

Kerr wound up with nine points, five of them in a key 10-0 run in the fourth quarter. Pippen, the only starter on the floor for Chicago at the time, had the other five.

For Utah, Malone had 21 points — but was just 7-for-15 from the free throw line — along with seven rebounds and four steals. Jeff Hornacek had 18

points, Russell had 17 and centre Greg Ostertag snagged eight rebounds. John Stockton had 13 points, five assists one steal, two blocks and just three turnovers.

Chicago's 10-point

fourth-quarter run, capped by Kerr's 3-pointer with 8:53 remaining, turned a Utah lead of 73-64 into a Chicago lead of 74-73. It was Chicago's first lead since 5:28 was left in the first quarter.

Linescore for Game 6 of NBA finals

| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Utah | 23 | 21 | 26 | 16 | 86 |
| Chicago | 17 | 20 | 27 | 26 | 90 |

- **High Scorers:**
Utah - Karl Malone 21, Jeff Hornacek 18, Bryon Russell 17.
- **High Rebound:**
Utah - Greg Ostertag 8, Karl Malone 7
Chi - Michael Jordan 11, Dennis Rodman 11
- **High Assists:**
Utah - John Stockton 5, Howard Easley 3
Chi - Michael Jordan 4, Dennis Rodman 3

Then after a seesaw seven-minute stretch in which neither team led by more than three points, Russell hit a long 3-pointer to tie the game at 86-86 with 1:44 to go.

Chicago missed three quick shots and Stockton rebounded, but Malone missed as United Centre workers, somewhat prematurely, scurried along the sidelines with a rope to protect the on court championship ceremony.

It was still anybody's ball game as the Jazz desperately tried to take the series to a seventh game.

Jordan missed with 48 seconds to go and Utah rookie Shandon Anderson missed his second lefty lay-in of the game with just under a half minute left. Rodman motioned that he got a piece of the ball for a block.

The ball went to Jordan with just over 10 seconds left, but he was quickly double-teamed and dished off to Kerr, who knocked down the game-winning shot.

"They did what champions do, they made the plays down the stretch," Malone said.

The Jazz led 23-17 at the end of the first quarter, and in the second went up by as many as 10 twice, and led 44-37 at the half. It could have been more but Malone missed 7-of-11 from the foul line and was only 3-for-8 from the field halfway through.

"You make them it's great, you miss them it's not so good," said Malone, whose team felt they had let this game, and two others that went down to the wire, get away.

"We won one of four games that we could have won," said Hornacek.

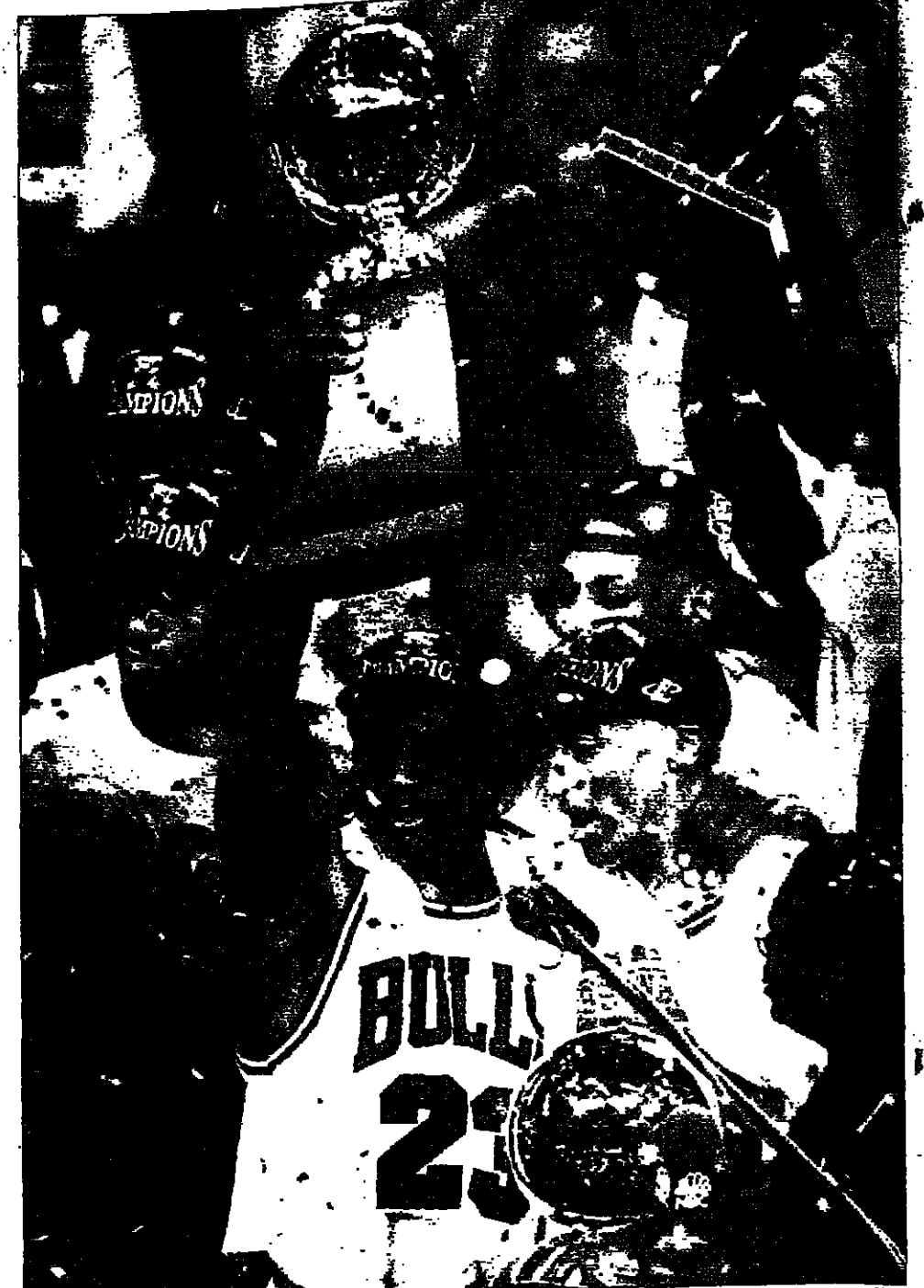
"We let them take it away from us," said Ostertag. "For some reason at the end they seem to always do what they have to do."

"Granted they beat us, they played like champions," said Stockton. "But I think everyone in the locker room thinks we belong here and that's what I'm going to take next year."

Pippen said the Jazz were the toughest finals opponents the Bulls had ever faced.

"We never had control of this game. Period," said Pippen.

"They really gave us a run and I look forward to seeing them here again."



Chicago Bulls Michael Jordan (L) and Scottie Pippen hold the NBA championship trophy following the Bulls win over the Utah Jazz in Game Six to capture the NBA title at Chicago's United Centre. Jordan scored 39 points and Pippen scored 23 points in the 90-86 victory (Reuters photo)

Michael wants to keep Bulls together — even Rodman

CHICAGO (R) — Michael Jordan lectured Chicago Bulls' management about loyalty Friday, saying he believed the players deserved a chance at another NBA championship and warning that breaking them up would send him to the golf course.

"We're entitled to defend what we have until we lose it," a dead-serious Jordan said after the Bulls clinched their fifth NBA championship in the last seven years.

"We want the opportunity to show that we're the greatest of all time, and the only way we can continue to prove that is to keep us together," Bulls co-captain Scottie Pippen said.

Jordan, the game's greatest player and the league's biggest draw, reiterated that he would quit rather than play for anyone other than Phil Jackson. Bulls coach for all five titles beginning with the 1990-91 season.

Jackson, who like Jordan had a one-year contract, and team general manager Jerry Krause have not commented on the Bulls' coaching situation for next year.

Jordan has also said the team's second star, Pippen, should not be traded ahead of his final contract year, as has been rumored.

"There has to be some consideration, some sense of loyalty, to myself, to Scottie, to Phil, even to the guys who have given themselves over the last two years — even Dennis (Rodman) for all the different colours he may wear in his hair or (his) dresses."

"Rebuilding? Nobody is guaranteeing rebuilding is going to (take) two, three, four, five years," Jordan continued. "The (Chicago) Bulls have been rebuilding for 42 years," he said, prompting laughter about the team with baseball's

History of NBA finals MVPs

- 1997 — Michael Jordan, Chicago
- 1996 — Michael Jordan, Chicago
- 1995 — Hakeem Olajuwon, Houston
- 1994 — Hakeem Olajuwon, Houston
- 1993 — Michael Jordan, Chicago
- 1992 — Michael Jordan, Chicago
- 1991 — Michael Jordan, Chicago
- 1990 — Isiah Thomas, Detroit
- 1989 — Joe Dumars, Detroit
- 1988 — James Worthy, Los Angeles Lakers
- 1987 — Magic Johnson, Los Angeles Lakers
- 1986 — Larry Bird, Boston
- 1985 — Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Los Angeles Lakers
- 1984 — Larry Bird, Boston
- 1983 — Moses Malone, Philadelphia
- 1982 — Magic Johnson, Los Angeles Lakers
- 1981 — Cedric Maxwell, Boston
- 1980 — Magic Johnson, Los Angeles Lakers
- 1979 — Dennis Johnson, Seattle
- 1978 — Wes Unseld, Washington
- 1977 — Bill Walton, Portland
- 1976 — Jo Jo White, Boston
- 1975 — Rick Barry, Golden State
- 1974 — John Havlicek, Boston
- 1973 — Willis Reed, New York
- 1972 — Wilt Chamberlain, Los Angeles Lakers
- 1971 — Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Milwaukee
- 1970 — Willis Reed, New York
- 1969 — Jerry West, Los Angeles Lakers

longest championship drought — actually far longer than 42 years.

"I don't know what it's going to take... But I think we're entitled to defend what we have and Phil should be the head coach and I shouldn't have to make the decision to play for another coach," Jordan said.

"Simple as that. Sad as it may be, I have choices, and I will not choose to play for another coach."

It may have been the afterglow of the Bulls' victory but both Jordan and Pippen urged team owner Jerry Reinsdorf to bring back Rodman, the controversial, madcap six-time NBA

rebounding king, for a try at a sixth championship.

Rodman, who won two titles with the Detroit Pistons, Friday became the only player to win back-to-back championships with two different teams.

Besides mixed emotions concerning the oft-suspended Rodman, who was just fined \$50,000 for his insulting comments about Utah's Mormons, Bulls' management must consider the twin factors of age and money.

Jordan is 34 years old and Rodman is 36, and they earned an estimated \$30 million and \$9 million respectively on one-year contracts that expire after this season.

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

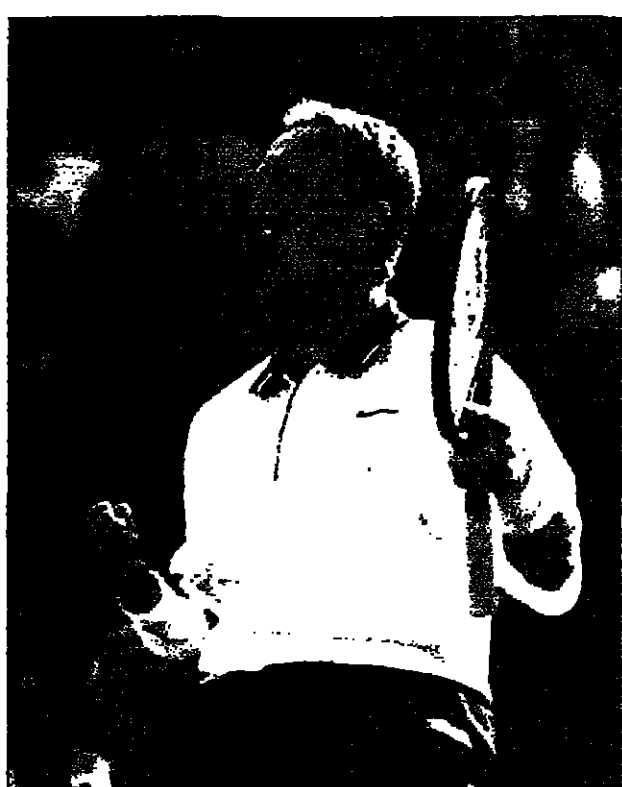
Q. 1 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AQ10884 ♠10 OAK92 ♠AK5
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass
What do you bid now?
Q. 2 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AQJ975 ♠742 ♠1082 ♠AQ3
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass 3♠ Pass
What do you bid now?
Q. 3 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
AQ83 ♠AQ10 ♠Q92 ♠AJ10
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass 3♠ Pass
What do you bid now?
Q. 4 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AA10932 ♠AQ10 ♠AK5 ♠A73
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass 3♠ Pass
What do you bid now?
Q. 5 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AAK6 ♠Q10 ♠AKJ74 ♠Q9843
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass 3♠ Pass
What do you bid now?
Q. 6 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
AA8762 ♠A7 ♠AQ8 ♠A543
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass 3♠ Pass
What do you bid now?

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|-----------------|--|--|--|---|--|



Top seed Pete Sampras towels off in the final set of his quarterfinal match against Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden. Bjorkman won the match 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 (Reuters photo)



Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden celebrates after toppling No. 1 seed Pete Sampras in their quarterfinal match at the Queens Club grasscourt championships in London (Reuters photo)

Sampras, Rafter dumped out of Queen's

LONDON (R) — An uncomfortable-looking Pete Sampras stumbled out of his only pre-Wimbledon warm-up tournament at Queen's Club on Friday after suffering a 3-6 6-3 6-4 quarter-final defeat to unseeded Swede Jonas Bjorkman. The World No. 1, who has had little practice on grass after receiving a bye and a walkover in his three previous rounds, was undone by a welter of errors and mis-timed shots and could not find his usual precision at the net. Even so, defeat looked unlikely when he won the first set in pedestrian style, with Bjorkman, 25, also struggling. But the Swedish Davis Cup player found his form in the second set, breaking the shaky Sampras serve in the eighth game and surviving a torrid ninth game with two break points to pull even. The Swede, who has lost to Sampras at each of their past four meetings, broke the American in the first game of the third set with some blistering returns. He lost his own serve as Sampras drew level 4-4 then attacked again, rushing the net and unsettling the world

number one. Bjorkman broke to 5-4 then went in for the kill. Sampras finally went down with a weak return on match point which the Swede punished with a backhand volley. "I might have picked up a few small weaknesses in his game," Bjorkman said afterwards. "After playing him a few times I know he can miss in a few positions." Sampras was also beaten by another Swede, Magnus Norman, in the third round of the recent French Open. Earlier Greg Rusedski became the first-ever Briton to reach the tournament's semifinals. He beat French Open semifinalist Patrick Rafter of Australia 4-6 7-5 6-3. Fellow big server Mark Philippoussis of Australia also won through, beating Jens Knippschild of Germany 6-2 6-7 6-4. Philippoussis will meet Bjorkman in the semifinals while Rusedski will face either third-seeded Croat Goran Ivanesevic or Jerome Golmard of France.

U.S. sprinting witnesses changing of the guard

INDIANAPOLIS (R) — Maurice Greene and Marion Jones, two up-and-coming speedsters, raced to the forefront of American sprinting with impressive 100-meter victories at the U.S. athletics championships on Friday. Greene clocked 9.90 seconds to edge fellow 22-year-old Tim Montgomery by 0.02 seconds in a changing of the guard of U.S. Sprinters. Mike Marsh, the 1992 Olympic 200-meter champion, earned the final U.S. 100-meter berth for August's world championships in 10.03 seconds. He beat Jon Drummond by four-thousandths of a second. Former World Record-Holder Leroy Burrell finished sixth in 10.09. Only six men have ever run faster than Greene, a member of the 1995 U.S. World Championship Team who was injured last year. "It's a great feeling," Greene said. "Last year was disappointing, but I knew if I trained the right way, my time would come." The 21-year-old Jones, a teenaged sprint star who has concentrated on basketball in recent years, won the women's crown in 10.97 seconds to complete two days of sensational sprinting. She had clocked 10.98 and 10.92 seconds, the year's two fastest times, in Thursday's preliminaries. "I'm exceptionally excited," said Jones. "After

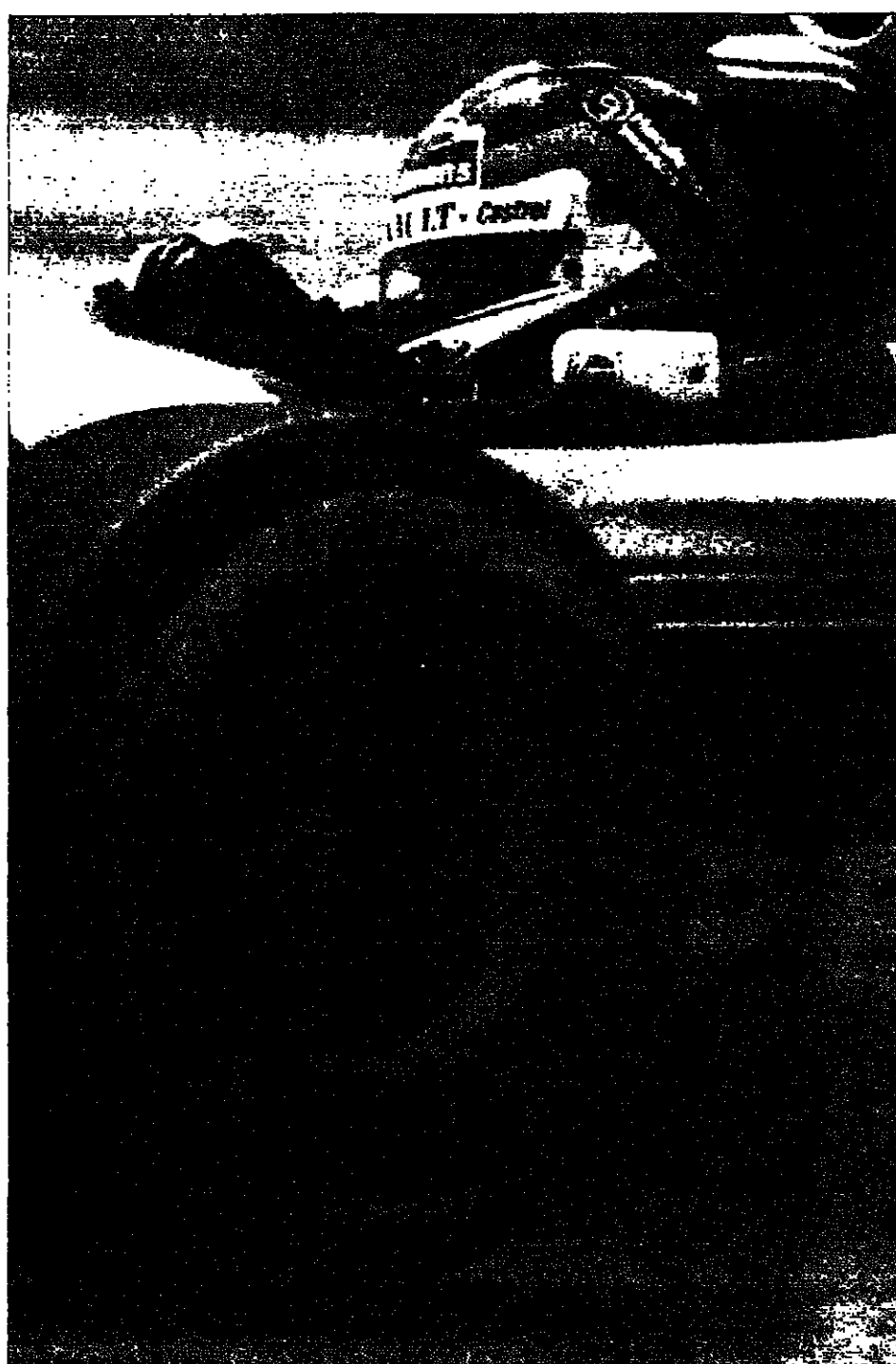
Becker's wins, Muster out

HALLE, Germany (AFP) — Triple Wimbledon champion Boris Becker qualified for the semi-finals of the grass court tournament here on Friday and said he hadn't enjoyed himself so much for years. The 29-year-old Becker, who is making his second comeback from injury this year, beat American Jeff Tarango, the present bad boy of the circuit, 6-4, 6-2. However, Becker's pleasure at how he was playing after returning from injury contrasted with compatriot Michael Stich, who is set to retire this season following a persistent run of injuries. The 28-year-old Stich, the 1991 Wimbledon champion, missed out on a semi-final meeting with Becker as he went down in three sets to Yevgeny Kafelnikov — 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (7/4), 3-6. The other semi-final pits Petr Korda of the Czech Republic, who beat fading former world number one Thomas Muster 6-3, 6-4, against solid Dutchman Paul Haarhuis, who eased through 6-2, 6-1 against last year's semi-finalist Richey Reneberg of the United States.

Kuerten wins; Arazi upset as Mantilla faces Alami

BOLOGNA, Italy (R) — French Open Champion Gustavo Kuerten defeated top seed Alberto Berasategui in the quarter-finals of the \$328,000 Bologna International Men's Clay-Court Tennis Tournament on Friday. The 20-year old Brazilian, who is ranked 15 in the world after being catapulted from 66th place by his French victory, battled for three sets with the Spaniard, who ranks one place above him. Kuerten, seeded eight, lost a tie-break in the second set before an eventual victory of 6-3 6-7 7-5, his 15th consecutive win. He moves on to the semifinal where he faces Italian Marzio Martelli, ranked 124 in the world. Martelli earlier knocked out fifth seed Hicham Arazi of Morocco in a three-set confrontation which began shakily for the Italian but ended 2-6 6-3 6-4 in his favour. The Italian will be playing his first semifinals in an ATP event.

Number two seed Felix Mantilla of Spain remains in the picture, however, after a 4-6 6-4 6-3 triumph over Ecuador's Nicolas Lapentti. The Spaniard, ranked 16, will face sixth seed Morocco's Karim Alami who beat unseeded Italian Andrea Gaudenzi 3-6 6-3 6-3.



Canadian Jacques Villeneuve drives through a hairpin turn during practice at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal. The 1997 Canadian Grand Prix will be run June 15 (Reuters photo)

Frentzen spoils Villeneuve homecoming in Montreal

MONTREAL (R) — German Heinz-Harald Frentzen spoiled what was expected to be a happy homecoming for his Williams team-mate Jacques Villeneuve on Friday when he outpaced him in opening practice for Sunday's Canadian Grand Prix. Frentzen, the quiet man in the background in the build-up to the 69-lap race, clocked his fastest lap in the closing minutes of a session interrupted by Briton David Coulthard's crash. Coulthard, in a McLaren, lost control of his car at the last chicane and slid into the barriers at high speed. The front right wheel was ripped off his car, but he was unhurt. Frentzen recorded a best time of one minute and 20.289 seconds, eight-tenths of

a second inside Briton Damon Hill's qualifying circuit record set last year. Italian Giancarlo Fisichella, in a Jordan, was second fastest ahead of Villeneuve whose first entry on to the track in the morning was greeted by a standing ovation from the home crowd. Villeneuve had flown back to Paris earlier in the week to be reprimanded by a world council meeting of the sport's ruling body FIA, for swearing. Frenchman Jean Alesi in a Benetton was fourth fastest, ahead of fellow-Frenchman Olivier Panis in a Prost and Briton Johnny Herbert in a Sauber.

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Oklahoma City bomber remains enigmatic despite death sentence

DENVER (R) — Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh remained as enigmatic as ever despite being sentenced to death for the worst mass murder in American history.

Survivors and relatives of bomb victims expressed relief Friday when a jury in Denver handed Mr. McVeigh a death sentence for the April 19, 1995 attack on the Alfred P. Murrah federal building that killed 168 people.

The same jury had found the 29-year-old Gulf war veteran guilty on June 2 of 11 first-degree murder, conspiracy and explosives charges.

But for many relatives, relief was tempered with sorrow at seeing a man sent to his death. Some also felt compassion for Mr. McVeigh's grief-stricken parents who now must go through the same pain they did when they lost loved ones in the bombing.

"It was a release of the weight that has been on my shoulders for two years. It was a feeling of joy — then sadness started taking over," said Dan McKinney, whose wife Linda died in the bombing.

"We're pleased that the system worked and that justice prevailed. But the verdict doesn't diminish the great sadness that occurred in Oklahoma City two years ago," chief prosecutor, Joe Hartzler, said as he left the Denver courthouse.

"The jury has spoken ... we ask that the barriers and intolerance which have

divided us may crumble, that suspicions disappear, and that hatreds cease," chief defence lawyer Stephen Jones told reporters after the jury rejected his plea to spare Mr. McVeigh's life.

The man at the centre of the storm remained outwardly calm as the jury of seven men and five women reached their verdict after deliberating for 11 hours. The verdict was read to the packed courtroom by Federal Judge Richard Matsch, who will formally pronounce sentence at a later hearing.

Mr. McVeigh sat still and expressionless, as he has been throughout the seven-week trial. As he left the courtroom, Mr. McVeigh looked at his heart-broken parents and appeared to mouth the words: "It's all right."

Mr. McVeigh's sister, Jennifer, who testified against him under a grant of immunity from prosecution, cried. His divorced parents sat motionless.

"Who knows? Who can explain that guy? I can't," Ralph Duke, whose daughter Claudette Meek was killed in the bombing, said when asked about Mr. McVeigh's demeanour.

Mr. McVeigh, who had pleaded not guilty, did not testify during his trial. He betrayed scarcely any emotion during even the most painful testimony and showed no sign of remorse.

Denver trial attorney Scott Robinson, who closely followed the trial, believed Mr.

McVeigh saw himself as a martyr and as a "good soldier — name, rank and serial number only."

The defence suggested that Mr. McVeigh was motivated by anger at the deaths of 80 Branch Davidian cult members in a confrontation with federal agents at Waco, Texas, exactly two years before the bombing.

Terry Nichols, who is accused of helping Mr. McVeigh carry out the bombing, is due to be tried separately later, but Mr. McVeigh's lawyers say other unidentified people may have been involved. Mr. Jones told jurors Thursday that if they sentenced Mr. McVeigh to death, the full truth about the bombing may never be known.

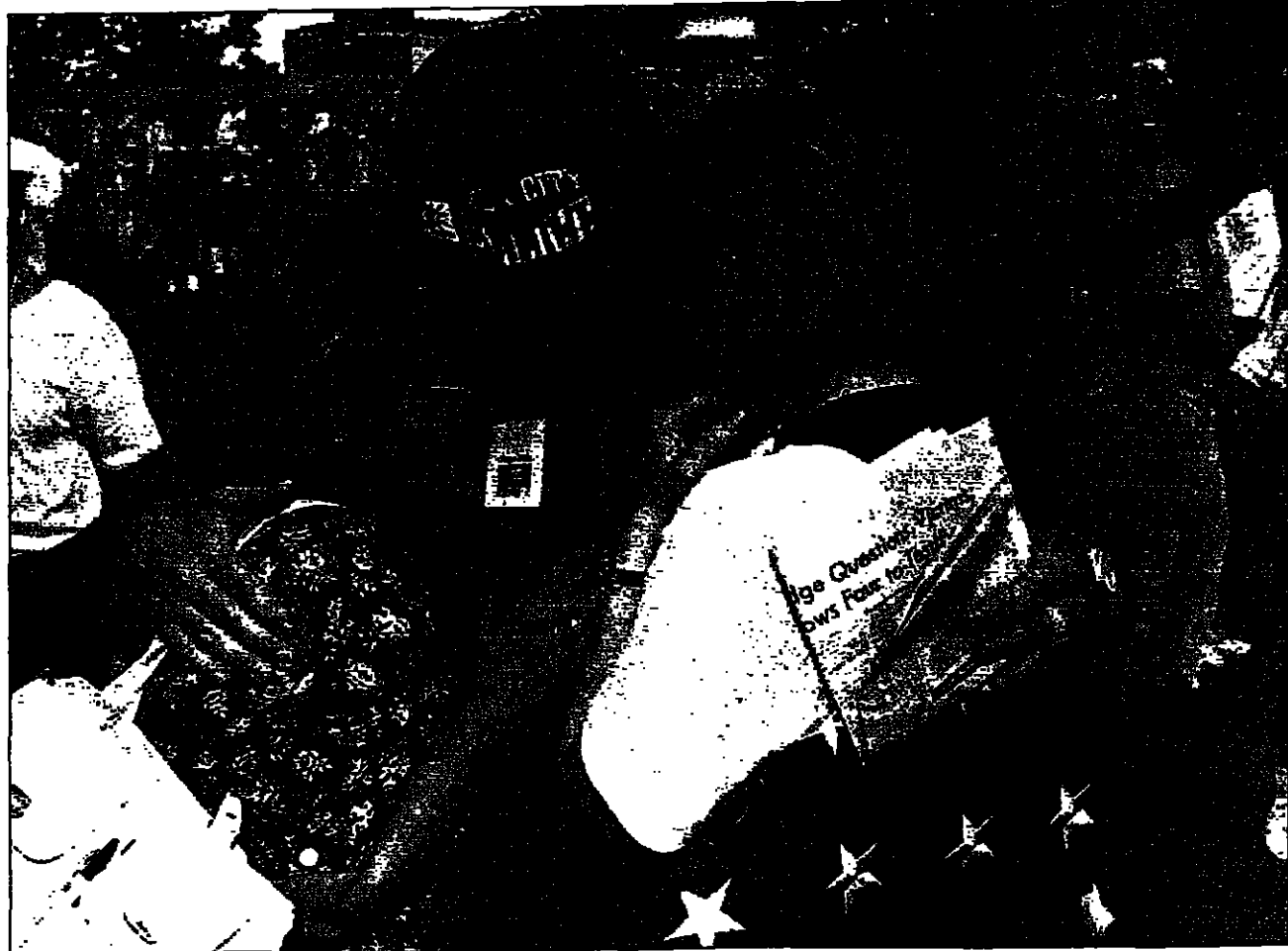
In Oklahoma City, families of bomb victims applauded the death sentence and said they hoped the anti-government paranoia that inspired the attack would die with Mr. McVeigh.

Dozens of people gathered at the downtown Oklahoma City site where the federal building used to stand. Many applauded briefly as news came through that Mr. McVeigh had been sentenced to death in a courtroom 1,000 kilometres away in Denver.

There was little of the joy seen there last week when the Denver jury found Mr. McVeigh guilty of the attack.

"You don't want to cele-

(Continued on page 7)



EMOTIONS AFTER DEATH SENTENCE: Oklahoma City police chaplain Jack Poe embraces Priscilla Salyers (L) and Karen Evans (R) at the fence surrounding the Oklahoma City bomb site after hearing the news that a Denver jury had sentenced Timothy McVeigh to death for his role in the April 1995 bombing of the federal building. Chaplain Poe worked with the rescue effort following the bombing. Ms. Salyers worked in the U.S. Customs Office and survived the bombing and Evans' daughter did not attend day care the day of the bombing (Reuter photo)

Cohen in Saudi Arabia says U.S. to stick to Iran and Iraq policy

JEDDAH (AFP) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen said Saturday the United States would stick to its dual containment policy of Iran and Iraq, after arriving here on the first leg of five-nation Gulf tour.

Mr. Cohen told reporters he detected no wavering in Saudi support for the policy since the election last month of moderate cleric Mohammad Khatami as president of Iran.

He indicated he was not concerned about Saudi overtures to open a dialogue with Iran, saying it could help to understand the extent to which Mr. Khatami's election represented a change in Iranian policy.

"Anytime you have dialogue or conversation that you draw information from that can be helpful," he told reporters travelling with him.

"But I don't see any wavering whatsoever on the part of the Saudis. They are

very strongly in favour of our policy," he said.

Relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which had been tense since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, have been on the mend this year, an improvement marked by Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati's visit to the kingdom in March.

The Saudi government also welcomed Mr. Khatami's election, saying the kingdom hoped his election marked a new chapter in relations between the countries.

The emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, during a visit to Washington last week pronounced the dual containment policy a failure and urged a rethinking of U.S. strategy in the Gulf.

Mr. Cohen was greeted here by Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz, and was expected to meet late Saturday with Saudi King

Fahd. Jeddah was the first stop of a Gulf tour that will take Mr. Cohen to Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Oman before he returns to Washington Wednesday.

The support of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states is crucial to the U.S. policy of containment.

Some 22,000 U.S. soldiers, sailors and airmen are based in the Gulf, most of them aboard navy ships but more than 4,000 at a Saudi air base in the desert to enforce a no-fly zone in southern Iraq.

The defence secretary's arrival here coincided with the anniversary in the Islamic calendar of the June 25, 1996 truck bombing at a U.S. military housing complex in Dhahran that killed 19 U.S. servicemen.

No formal charges have been brought in the case, and U.S. officials said they did not expect a report on the conclusions of the Saudi

investigation during Mr. Cohen's meeting.

The evidence of Iranian involvement "is still inconclusive," Mr. Cohen said. "The investigation continues but we're not going to make any pre-judgement about that."

Mr. Cohen said the United States will take "basically a 'show me' attitude" toward Iran, making no change in policy as long as Tehran supports terrorism, develops weapons of mass destruction and sabotages the Middle East peace process.

"We will be looking with some hopefulness that this election represents a change but we will have to wait and see. For the time being our policy will remain constant," he said.

During his stay, Mr. Cohen also will visit U.S. troops at the Prince Sultan Air Base and review measures to protect U.S. forces since last year's bombing.

First Iraqi delegation in 17 years arrives in Syria

AL-TANAF (AP) — A 37-member Iraqi business delegation arrived in Syria Friday in a sign of warming relations between the two countries who severed diplomatic ties 17 years ago.

The businessmen, led by the chairman of the Iraqi chamber of commerce, Zuhair Abdul-Ghaffour Yousif, crossed the Al-Tanaf border post and were greeted by their Syrian counterparts.

This is the first time any group of Iraqis has visited Syria officially since Iraq severed ties and closed borders in 1980, accusing Syria of siding with Iran during its 1980-88 war.

Last month, a Syrian business delegation visited Baghdad, and signed agreements to export food, detergent and soap under a

United Nations deal that allows Iraq to buy essential goods, circumventing a wide trade embargo meant punish it for invading Kuwait in 1990.

But both countries are unwilling to rush into normalising relations, although officials admit that it is bound to happen sooner or later.

The Iraqi visit is purely "for business and has no political aspect," Rateb Shallah, the chairman of Syria's Chamber of Commerce, told reporters at Al-Tanaf, 275 kilometres southeast of the Syrian capital, Damascus.

Still, he said, differences "should be forgotten and normal relations should be resumed."

"Usually the resumption of relations in the economic field is followed, no

matter how long later, by the resumption of diplomatic ties," he said.

Relations also were strained over Syria's military support of the U.S.-led coalition that drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait in February 1991.

Syria and Iraq also are preparing to open two main crossing points, the Abu Al-Shamat and Albu Kamal, for commercial exchange. At present, Iraq's frontiers are open only to Jordan and Turkey.

Besides trade, Iraq and Syria share a common problem with Turkey which controls the flow of the water of the Euphrates river. The two Arab nations accuse Ankara of building huge dams and depriving them of their rightful share of the water.

Alleged spy's lawyer wants legal action against Egyptian reporters

CAIRO (AP) — A lawyer defending an Arab Israeli accused of spying for Israel demanded Saturday that legal action be taken against two Egyptian journalists for their alleged attempt to influence the trial of his client.

Egyptian lawyer Farid Deeb said Ahmed Moussa of Cairo's leading Al-Ahram daily and Samir Ragab, chairman of the daily Al-Gomhuriya and its former editor-in-chief, had written articles that prejudged his client, Azam Azam.

Mr. Deeb, holding the articles in question in hand, urged the court to take legal action against them, but there was no immediate response from presiding judge Moharam Darweesh.

Mr. Azam himself refused to speak to Egyptian journalists on Saturday, accusing them of misquoting him.

"You never write the words that come from my mouth, so go ahead and write what you want," he said. He spoke in Hebrew to Israeli journalists.

Mr. Deeb stated his case as a small noisy group of Egyptian lawyers outside the courtroom called him a "dog" for accepting the case

and shouted anti-Israeli slogans.

Mr. Deeb has been sharply criticised in the Egyptian press and by fellow lawyers for agreeing to defend Mr. Azam. After the case's last hearing on May 18, a lawyer hit Mr. Deeb in the face inside the courtroom, while others screamed insults at him. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Israeli diplomats present.

Saturday's session, however, was orderly because Mr. Darweesh, the judge, had made it compulsory that anyone wishing to attend the hearing must obtain a special permit in advance.

Mr. Azam's relatives and Israeli diplomats attended Saturday's hearing, which was procedural. The trial resumes on Tuesday.

Mr. Azam's case has received wide attention in the Egyptian and Israeli media and has further strained already cool relations between Egypt and Israel, signatories of a 1979 peace treaty.

Pleading his innocence, Israel has demanded his release, but Egypt has said that matter was for the court to decide.

Mr. Azam's co-defendants in the case are Israeli Arab

women Zahra Yousef Jreis and Mona Ahmed Shawahna, who are being tried in absentia, and an Egyptian man, Emad Abdel-Hamid Ismail.

Prosecutors have said that the two women were Israeli agents who recruited Mr. Ismail, a schoolteacher, to spy on Egypt.

The indictment states that the women slept with Mr. Ismail, who at one point worked at a factory in Israel, after meeting him at an Israeli nightclub.

Mr. Azam, who worked in a textile company near Cairo at the time of his arrest in November, is alleged by the prosecutors to have given Mr. Ismail women's underwear soaked in invisible ink to be used for writing secret messages to Israel.

Mr. Azam and Mr. Ismail entered pleas of innocent when their trial opened April 24.

On Saturday, Mr. Deeb demanded that the court disregard a report by a chemical expert brought to examine evidence in the case — the women's underwear soaked in invisible ink — on grounds that he was not a specialist and his appointment did not observe correct procedures.

Indonesian president on visit to Turkey

JAKARTA (AP) — President Suharto left Friday for Turkey to attend the first summit of eight predominantly Muslim developing nations known as the "D-8."

Gen. Suharto's party included Foreign Minister Ali Alatas, minister at the state secretariat Mardiono and ambassador-at-large Nana Sutrisna.

A senior official said the summit will go ahead despite the crisis affecting the coalition government of Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan after prolonged tension with the military. "We have been assured that the coalition government will not fall, at least not during the summit," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Gen. Suharto is expected to hold bilateral meetings with several leaders Saturday, including those from Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Mr. Erbakan suggested the meeting when he met Gen. Suharto during a visit to Jakarta last year.

The D-8 groups Indonesia and Malaysia representing East Asia, Bangladesh and Pakistan representing South Asia, Turkey and Iran representing the Middle East, and Egypt and Nigeria representing Africa. D-8 membership is open to countries with more than 40 million people. Malaysia is an exception because it is regarded as a prominent developing country.

Islamic extremists kill 12 villagers, female student

ALGIERS (AFP) — Suspected Islamic extremists cut the throats of 12 villagers in the worst attack of its kind since legislative polls earlier this month, according to newspaper reports Saturday.

A female university student in the capital was also shot dead, they said, and there were conflicting reports over whether a group of teenage girls had been abducted.

The Arabic-language Al-Khabar daily said the 12 villagers were killed early Thursday by a group of some 20 armed assailants in Cherafia, near Boufarik, 30 kilometres south of the capital.

Al-Watan daily, for its part, put the death toll at nine, including four children, from two separate families.

According to the reports,

the armed group simulated an attack on a nearby village but targeted Cherafia.

"The killers battered down the doors of the houses before slitting the throats of the nine people," Al-Watan said.

It said the assailants wanted to abduct five girls aged 14 to 18, but that the teenagers managed to escape. However, Al-Khabar reported that they had in fact been kidnapped.

Hundreds of villagers have been massacred since November 1996 in similar gruesome attacks blamed on Islamic fundamentalists.

In many cases, the attackers left messages and the sign of the GIA (Armed Islamic Group) daubed in the blood of their victims on the walls.

The student who died was intercepted by gunmen

Thursday. They shot her twice in the face and stomach at point blank range.

Al-Watan said the motive for the 23-year-old's murder was unclear.

Algeria's bloody catalogue of violence has left around 60,000 people dead since the military-backed government annulled elections in January 1992 that the now-banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was set to win.

The violence had subsided amid tight security in the run-up to the latest polls on June 5, but rose again afterward.

Six villagers had their throats cut overnight Monday in Chief, about 200 kilometres west of Algiers, while six suspected extremists were killed in two separate clashes in and near the capital.

Cyprus cabbies step up strike

NICOSIA (R) — Cypriot taxi drivers launched a nationwide strike Saturday after sporadic protests which have disrupted public transport and caused inconvenience to hundreds of travellers.

The protests by some 1,250 taxi drivers are aimed at forcing the cancellation of what they say are plans by the authorities to issue an additional 250 taxi licences.

Cabbies blocked access to the island's main airport in the southern town of Larnaca for a five-hour period from Friday to Saturday.

The protest caused mile-long traffic jams and forced tourists to haul their luggage to the motor way to hitch lifts to their holiday destinations. Drivers unblocked the roads after police issued warnings.

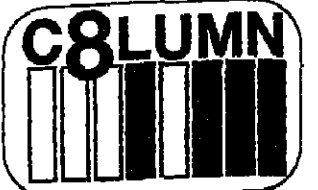
"There are more than enough taxis. We live this every day and business is going down. We don't have enough business so why issue new licences?" said Kypros Andreou, the taxi drivers' union leader.

He said the protest, which started Thursday, would spread to the port in the nearby

southern town of Limassol, though access would not be affected.

The licensing authority has not publicly stated that it will be giving out new licences, but has not denied newspaper reports that it will be issuing them either.

"It is not our intention to block roads," Mr. Andreou told Reuters. "And it is naive to think we have not thought about the inconvenience to tourists. Much of our business comes from them but this time around we have really been pushed to the limit."



Former U.S. Secretary of State getting married

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz is engaged to be married this summer to San Francisco's chief of protocol. The 76-year-old widower will marry Charlotte Maillard Swig, 63 and twice-widowed, on Aug. 15. "We sort of made an impact on each other and we started to see quite a bit of each other about a year ago," he was quoted as saying in Friday's Washington Post. The couple met when he returned to California from Washington and Swig came to his Stanford University office to discuss a dinner in his honour. Shultz was Secretary of State from 1982 to 1989.

Turner challenges Murdoch to boxing match

LOS ANGELES (R) — U.S. media mogul Ted Turner challenged on Friday his longtime rival Rupert Murdoch to a boxing match in order to settle their differences once and for all. In light-hearted remarks to a group of Hollywood entertainment leaders, Turner volunteered to donate the proceeds to charity. "What do you think about Rupert Murdoch and Ted Turner putting on gloves and getting into the ring," the Time Warner Inc. vice-chairman, who also owns the Atlanta Braves National League baseball franchise, asked the crowd. "Nobody's seen two 60-year-olds fight in a long time," Turner said. "It would be good entertainment and we could give all the money to charity. To the indigenous actors' home." Turner has often brought the bitter professional rivalry with Murdoch down to a personal level, and last year caused an outrage by likening him to Adolf Hitler. He later apologised for the remarks — not to Murdoch but to Jewish groups.

British historians bicker over Hitler 'self-portrait'

LONDON (AFP) — Two British experts on Nazi Germany are in dispute over whether a drawing of Adolf Hitler is a self-portrait, a press report said Saturday. The Times said the pencil picture, taken as a souvenir by a British soldier advancing through Germany in 1945, was signed and dated by the Nazi leader. Michael MacKintosh, a Hitler expert who authenticated the work before it goes on auction later this month, told the paper he was convinced the drawing is a genuine work by Hitler. But David Irving, the controversial rightwing historian who was the first to spot that the Hitler diaries were fake, said the work was from another artist when shown a copy by The Times. He compared the drawing to a self-portrait of Hitler which he owns and said it was of a superior quality to the dictator's "crude" style.

Nicaraguan baby, stuck to mother's intestine, born

MANAGUA (R) — Nicaraguan doctors said on Friday they had successfully delivered an infant last week in an extremely rare case where the placenta had attached itself to the 15-year-old mother's small intestine. "It is an extremely rare case," Quiroz said. "In the world, the percentage of survival for these babies is between 0.1 and 0.3 per cent," gynecologist Sergio Quiroz, assistant director of the Bertha Calderon hospital, told Reuters. The placenta was adhered to the small intestine, which it perforated in order to absorb nutrients," he added. The little girl, who has not been named, was born surgically to 15-year-old Silvia Jimenez who was reported in good condition and recovering from the birth.